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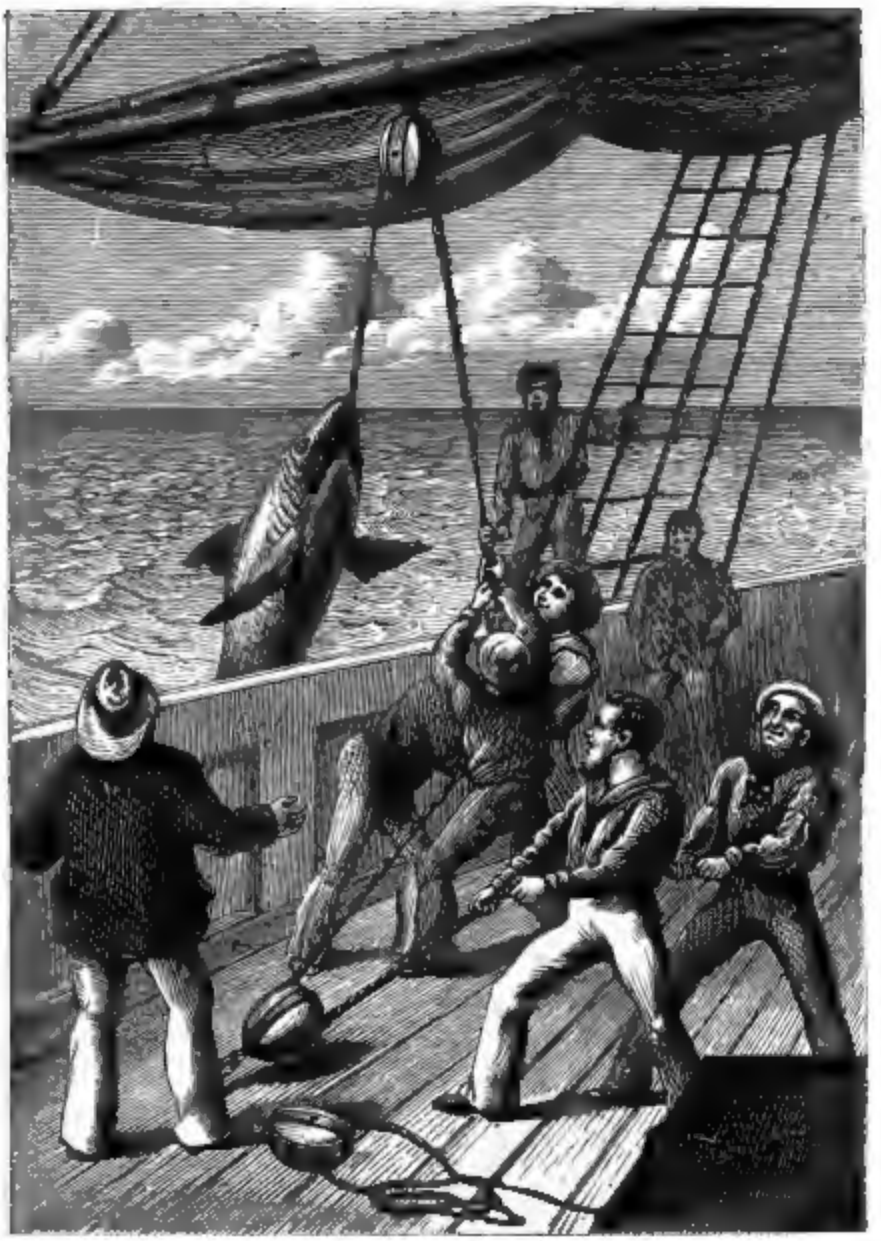

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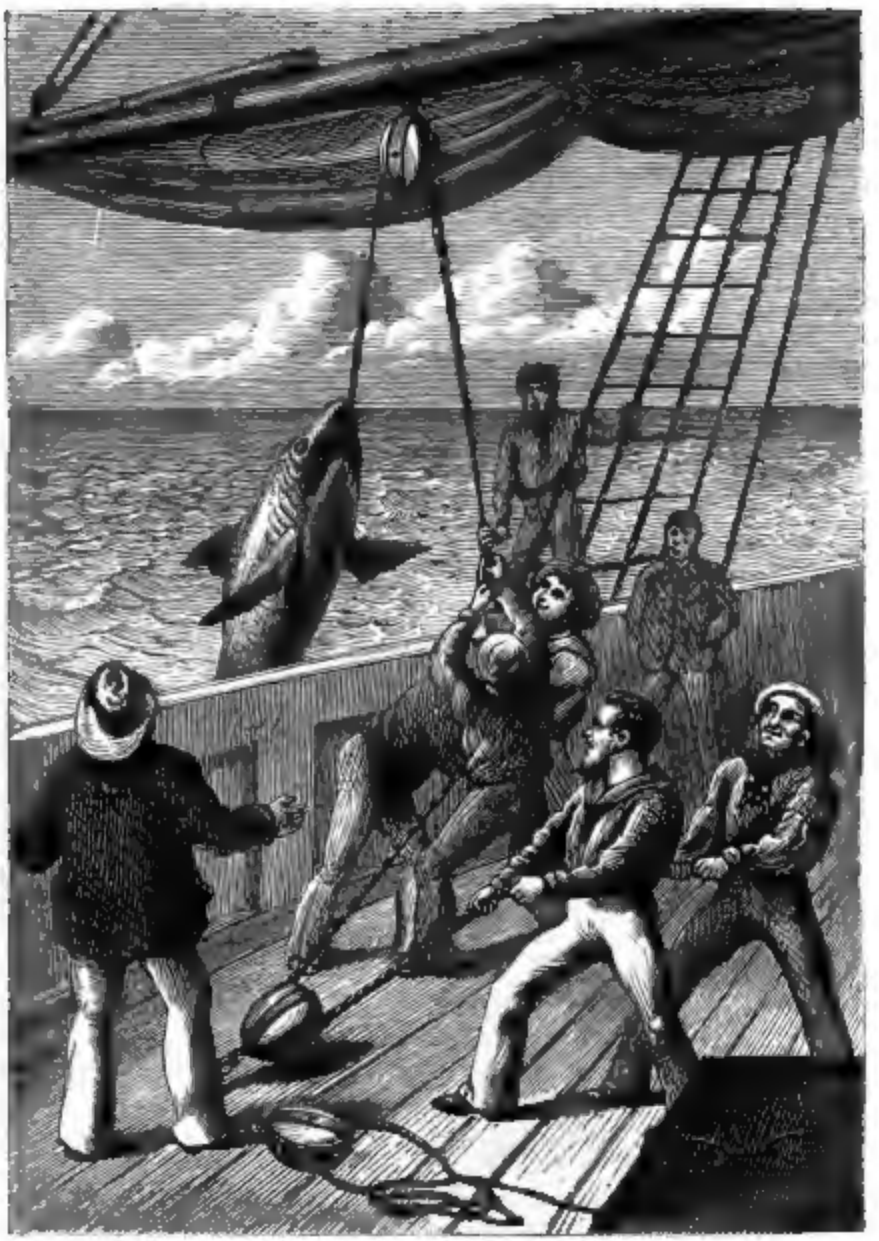

Catching the Shark.

TALES OF ADVENTURE

ON THE SEA.

By R. M. BALLANTYNE.

SELECTED FROM BALLANTYNE'S MISCELLANY.

With Illustrations by the Author.

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PREFACE.

THE Four Tales contained in this Volume are selected from "Ballantyne's Miscellany," and illustrate some of man's experiences and adventures on the Sea in various quarters of the Globe. They are founded to a large extent on fact, and are intended to give a correct representation of the scenes and events depicted.

R. M. B.

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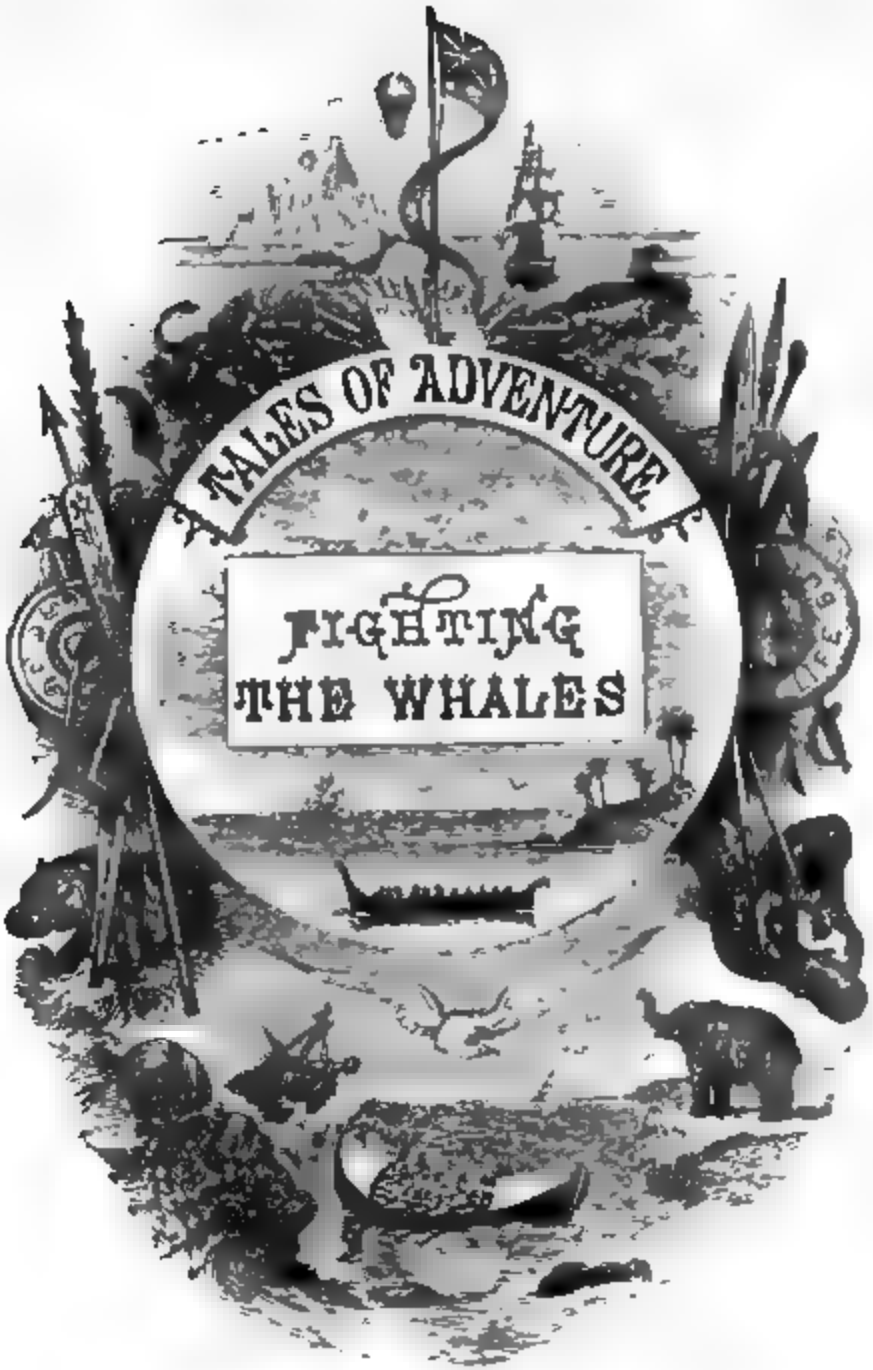

TALES OF ADVENTURE
FIGHTING
THE WHALES

FIGHTING THE WHALES.

CHAPTER I.

IN TROUBLE, TO BEGIN WITH.

THERE are few things in this world that have filled me with so much astonishment as the fact that man can kill a whale! That a fish, more than sixty feet long, and thirty feet round the body; with the bulk of three hundred fat oxen rolled into one; with the strength of many hundreds of horses; able to swim at a rate that would carry it right round the world in twenty-three days; that can smash a boat to atoms with one slap of its tail, and stave in the planks of a ship with one blow of its thick skull;—that such a monster can be caught and killed by man, is most wonderful to hear of, but I can tell from experience that it is much more wonderful to see.

There is a wise saying which I have often thought much upon. It is this: "Knowledge is

very gentle, she was the most trustful, uncomplaining woman I ever knew.

I looked up quickly into her face as she spoke, "All the money gone, mother?"

"Ay, all. It will be hard for you to go without your dinner, Robert, dear."

"It will be harder for *you*, mother," I cried, striking the table with my fist; then a lump rose in my throat and almost choked me. I could not utter another word.

It was with difficulty I managed to eat the little food that was before me. After breakfast I rose hastily and rushed out of the house, determined that I would get my mother her dinner, even if I should have to beg for it. But I must confess that a sick feeling came over me when I thought of begging.

Hurrying along the crowded streets without knowing very well what I meant to do, I at last came to an abrupt halt at the end of the pier. Here I went up to several people and offered my services in a wild sort of way. They must have thought that I was drunk, for nearly all of them said gruffly that they did not want me.

Dinner time drew near, but no one had given me a job, and no wonder, for the way in which I tried to get one was not likely to be successful. At last I resolved to beg. Observing a fat, red-faced old gentleman coming along the pier, I made

up to him boldly. He carried a cane with a large gold knob on the top of it. That gave me hope, "for of course," thought I, "he must be rich." His nose, which was exactly the colour and shape of the gold knob on his cane, was stuck in the centre of a round good-natured countenance, the mouth of which was large and firm; the eyes bright and blue. He frowned as I went forward hat in hand; but I was not to be driven back; the thought of my starving mother gave me power to crush down my rising shame. Yet I had no reason to be ashamed. I was willing to work, if only I could have got employment.

Stopping in front of the old gentleman, I was about to speak when I observed him quietly button up his breeches pocket. The blood rushed to my face, and, turning quickly on my heel, I walked away without uttering a word.

"Hallo!" shouted a gruff voice just as I was moving away.

I turned and observed that the shout was uttered by a broad rough-looking jack-tar, a man of about two or three and thirty, who had been sitting all the forenoon on an old cask smoking his pipe and basking in the sun.

"Hallo!" said he again.

"Well," said I.

"Wot d'ye mean, youngster, by goin' on in that there fashion all the mornin', a-botherin'

everybody, and makin' a fool o' yourself like that? eh!"

"What's that to you?" said I savagely, for my heart was sore and heavy, and I could not stand the interference of a stranger.

"Oh! it's nothin' to me of course," said the sailor, picking his pipe quietly with his clasp-knife; "but come here, boy, I've somethin' to say to ye."

"Well, what is it?" said I, going up to him somewhat sulkily.

The man looked at me gravely through the smoke of his pipe, and said "You're in a passion, my young buck, that's all; and, in case you didn't know it, I thought I'd tell ye."

I burst into a fit of laughter. "Well, I believe you're not far wrong; but I'm better now."

"Ah! that's right," said the sailor with an approving nod of his head, "always confess when you're in the wrong. Now, younker, let me give you a bit of advice. Never get into a passion if you can help it, and if you can't help it get out of it as fast as possible, and if you can't get out of it, just give a great roar to let off the steam and turn about and run. There's nothing like that. Passion han't got legs. It can't hold on to a feller when he's runnin'. If you keep it up till you a'most split your timbers, passion has no chance. It *must* go a-starn. Now, lad, I've been

watchin' ye all the mornin', and I see there's a screw loose somewhere. If you'll tell me wot it is, see if I don't help you !"

The kind frank way in which this was said quite won my heart, so I sat down on the old cask, and told the sailor all my sorrows.

"Boy," said he, when I had finished, "I'll put you in the way o' helpin' your mother. I can get you a berth in my ship, if you're willin' to take a trip to the whale fishery of the South Seas."

"And who will look after my mother when I'm away ?" said I.

The sailor looked perplexed at the question.

"Ah ! that's a puzzler," he replied, knocking the ashes out of his pipe. "Will you take me to your mother's house, lad ?"

"Willingly," said I, and, jumping up, I led the way. As we turned to go, I observed that the old gentleman with the gold-headed cane was leaning over the rail of the pier at a short distance from us. A feeling of anger instantly rose within me, and I exclaimed, loud enough for him to hear—

"I do believe that stingy old chap has been listening to every word we've been saying !"

I thought I observed a frown on the sailor's brow as I said this, but he made no remark, and in a few minutes we were walking rapidly through the streets. My companion stopped at one of

those stores so common in seaport towns, where one can buy almost anything, from a tallow candle to a brass cannon. Here he purchased a pound of tea, a pound of sugar, a pound of butter, and a small loaf,—all of which he thrust into the huge pockets of his coat. He had evidently no idea of proportion or of household affairs. It was a simple, easy way of settling the matter, to get a pound of everything.

In a short time we reached our house, a very old one, in a poor neighbourhood, and entered my mother's room. She was sitting at the table when we went in, with a large Bible before her, and a pair of horn-spectacles on her nose. I could see that she had been out gathering coals and cinders during my absence, for a good fire burned in the grate, and the kettle was singing cheerily thereon.

"I've brought a friend to see you, mother," said I.

"Good-day, mistress," said the sailor, bluntly, sitting down on a stool near the fire. "You seem to be goin' to have your tea."

"I expect to have it soon," replied my mother.

"Indeed!" said I, in surprise. "Have you anything in the kettle?"

"Nothing but water, my son."

"Has anybody brought you anything, then, since I went out?"

"Nobody."

"Why, then, mistress," broke in the seaman, "how can you expect to have your tea so soon?"

My mother took off her spectacles, looked calmly in the man's face, laid her hand on the Bible, and said, "Because I have been a widow woman these three years, and never once in all that time have I gone a single day without a meal. When the usual hour came I put on my kettle to boil, for this Word tells me that 'the Lord will provide.' I *expect* my tea to-night."

The sailor's face expressed puzzled astonishment at these words, and he continued to regard my mother with a look of wonder as he drew forth his supplies of food, and laid them on the table.

In a short time we were all enjoying a cup of tea, and talking about the whale-fishery and the difficulty of my going away while my mother was dependent on me. At last the sailor rose to leave us. Taking a five-pound note from his pocket, he laid it on the table and said—

"Mistress, this is all I have in the world, but I've got neither family nor friends, and I'm bound for the South Seas in six days; so, if you'll take it, you're welcome to it, and if your son Bob can manage to cast loose from you without leaving you to sink, I'll take him aboard the ship that I sail in. He'll always find me at the Bull and

Griffin, in the High Street, or at the end o' the pier."

While the sailor was speaking, I observed a figure standing in a dark corner of the room near the door, and, on looking more closely, I found that it was the old gentleman with the nose like his cane knob. Seeing that he was observed, he came forward and said—

"I trust that you will forgive my coming here without invitation; but I happened to overhear part of the conversation between your son and this seaman, and I am willing to help you over your little difficulty, if you will allow me."

The old gentleman said this in a very quick, abrupt way, and looked as if he were afraid his offer might be refused. He was much heated, with climbing our long stair no doubt, and as he stood in the middle of the room, puffing and wiping his bald head with a handkerchief, my mother rose hastily and offered him a chair.

"You are very kind, sir," she said; "do sit down, sir. I'm sure I don't know why you should take so much trouble. But, dear me, you are very warm; will you take a cup of tea to cool you?"

"Thank you, thank you. With much pleasure, unless, indeed, your son objects to a '*stingy old chap*' sitting beside him."

I blushed when he repeated my words, and

attempted to make some apology; but the old gentleman stopped me by commencing to explain his intentions in short, rapid sentences.

To make a long story short, he offered to look after my mother while I was away, and, to prove his sincerity, laid down five shillings, and said he would call with that sum every week as long as I was absent. My mother, after some trouble, agreed to let me go, and, before that evening closed, everything was arranged, and the gentleman, leaving his address, went away.

The sailor had been so much filled with surprise at the suddenness of all this, that he could scarcely speak. Immediately after the departure of the old gentleman, he said, "Well, good-bye, mistress, good-bye, Bob," and throwing on his hat in a careless way, left the room.

"Stop," I shouted after him, when he had got about half-way down stair.

"Hallo! wot's wrong now?"

"Nothing, I only forgot to ask your name."

"Tom Lokins," he bellowed, in the hoarse voice of a regular boatswain, "w'ich wos my father's name before me."

So saying, he departed, whistling "Rule Britannia" with all his might.

Thus the matter was settled. Six days afterwards, I rigged myself out in a blue jacket, white ducks, and a straw hat, and went to sea.

CHAPTER II.

AT SEA.

MY first few days on the ocean were so miserable, that I oftentimes repented of having left my native land. I was, as my new friend Tom Lokins said, as sick as a dog. But in course of time I grew well, and began to rejoice in the cool fresh breezes and the great rolling billows of the sea.

Many and many a time I used to creep out to the end of the bowsprit, when the weather was calm, and sit, with my legs dangling over the deep blue water, and my eyes fixed on the great masses of rolling clouds in the sky, thinking of the new course of life I had just begun. At such times the thought of my mother was sure to come into my mind, and I thought of her parting words, "Put your trust in the Lord, Robert, and read His Word." I resolved to try to obey her, but this I found was no easy matter, for the sailors were a rough lot of fellows, who cared little for the Bible. But, I must say, they were a hearty,

good-natured set, and much better, upon the whole, than many a ship's crew that I afterwards sailed with.

We were fortunate in having fair winds this voyage, and soon found ourselves on the other side of the *line*, as we jack-tars call the Equator.

Of course the crew did not forget the old custom of shaving all the men who had never crossed the line before. Our captain was a jolly old man, and uncommonly fond of "sky-larking." He gave us leave to do what we liked the day we crossed the line; so, as there were a number of wild spirits among us, we broke through all the ordinary rules, or, rather, we added on new rules to them.

The old hands had kept the matter quiet from us greenhorns, so that, although we knew they were going to do some sort of mischief, we didn't exactly understand what it was to be.

About noon of that day I was called on deck and told that old father Neptune was coming aboard, and we were to be ready to receive him. A minute after I saw a tremendous monster come up over the side of the ship and jump on the deck. He was crowned with sea-weed, and painted in a wonderful fashion; his clothes were dripping wet, as if he had just come from the bottom of the sea. After him came another monster with

a petticoat made of sailcloth and a tippet of a bit of old tarpaulin. This was Neptune's wife, and these two carried on the most remarkable antics I ever saw. I laughed heartily, and soon discovered, from the tones of their voices, which of my shipmates Neptune and his wife were. But my mirth was quickly stopped when I was suddenly seized by several men, and my face was covered over with a horrible mixture of tar and grease!

Six of us youngsters were treated in this way; then the lather was scraped off with a piece of old hoop-iron, and, after being thus shaved, buckets of cold water were thrown over us.

At last, after a prosperous voyage, we arrived at our fishing-ground in the South Seas, and a feeling of excitement and expectation began to show itself among the men, insomuch that our very eyes seemed brighter than usual.

One night those of us who had just been relieved from watch on deck, were sitting on the lockers down below telling ghost stories.

It was a dead calm, and one of those intensely dark, hot nights, that cause sailors to feel uneasy, they scarce know why. I began to feel so uncomfortable at last, listening to the horrible tales which Tom Lokins was relating to the men, that I slipt away from them with the intention of going on deck. I moved so quietly that no one

observed me; besides, every eye was fixed earnestly on Tom, whose deep low voice was the only sound that broke the stillness of all around. As I was going very cautiously up the ladder leading to the deck, Tom had reached that part of his story where the ghost was just appearing in a dark churchyard, dressed in white, and coming slowly forward, one step at a time, towards the terrified man who saw it. The men held their breath, and one or two of their faces turned pale as Tom went on with his description, lowering his voice to a hoarse whisper. Just as I put my head up the hatchway the sheet of one of the sails, which was hanging loose in the still air, passed gently over my head and knocked my hat off. At any other time I would have thought nothing of this, but Tom's story had thrown me into such an excited and nervous condition that I gave a start, missed my footing, uttered a loud cry, and fell down the ladder right in among the men with a tremendous crash, knocking over two or three oil-cans and a tin bread-basket in my fall, and upsetting the lantern, so that the place was instantly pitch dark.

I never heard such a howl of terror as these men gave vent to when this misfortune befell me. They rushed upon deck with their hearts in their mouths, tumbling, and peeling the skin off their shins and knuckles in their haste; and it was not

until they heard the laughter of the watch on deck that they breathed freely, and, joining in the laugh, called themselves fools for being frightened by a ghost story. I noticed, however, that, for all their pretended indifference, there was not one man among them—not even Tom Lokins himself—who would go down below to re-light the lantern for at least a quarter of an hour afterwards!

Feeling none the worse for my fall, I went forward and leaned over the bow of the ship, where I was much astonished by the appearance of the sea. It seemed as if the water was on fire. Every time the ship's bow rose and fell, the little belt of foam made in the water seemed like a belt of blue flame with bright sparkles in it, like stars or diamonds. I had seen this curious appearance before, but never so bright as it was on that night.

"What is it, Tom?" said I, as my friend came forward and leaned over the ship's bulwark beside me.

"It's blue fire, Bob," replied Tom, as he smoked his pipe calmly.

"Come, you know I can't swallow that," said I; "everybody knows that fire, either blue or red, can't burn in the water."

"May be not," returned Tom; "but it's blue fire for all that. Leastwise if it's not, I don't know wot else it is."

Tom had often seen this light before, no doubt, but he had never given himself the trouble to find out what it could be. Fortunately the captain came up just as I put the question, and he enlightened me on the subject.

"It is caused by small animals," said he, leaning over the side.

"Small animals!" said I, in astonishment.

"Ay, many parts of the sea are full of creatures so small and so thin and colourless, that you can hardly see them even in a clear glass tumbler. Many of them are larger than others, but the most of them are very small."

"But how do they shine like that, sir?" I asked.

"That I do not know, boy. God has given them the power to shine, just as he has given us the power to walk or speak; and they do shine brightly, as you see; but *how* they do it is more than I can tell. I think, myself, it must be anger that makes them shine, for they generally do it when they are stirred up or knocked about by oars, or ship's keels, or tumbling waves. But I am not sure that that's the reason either, because, you know, we often sail through them without seeing the light, though of course they must be there."

"P'raps, sir," said Tom Lokins; "p'raps, sir, they're sleepy sometimes, an' can't be bothered gettin' angry."

"Perhaps!" answered the captain, laughing. "But then again, at other times, I have seen them shining over the whole sea when it was quite calm, making it like an ocean of milk; and nothing was disturbing them at that time, d'ye see."

"I don' know *that*," objected Tom; "they might have bin a-fightin' among theirselves."

"Or playing, may be," said I.

The captain laughed, and, looking up at the sky, said, "I don't like the look of the weather, Tom Lokins. You're a sharp fellow, and have been in these seas before, what say you?"

"We'll have a breeze," replied Tom, briefly.

"More than a breeze," muttered the captain, while a look of grave anxiety overspread his countenance; "I'll go below and take a squint at the glass."

"What does he mean by that, Tom," said I, when the captain was gone, "I never saw a calmer or a finer night. Surely there is no chance of a storm just now."

"Ay, that shows that you're a young feller, and ha'nt got much experience o' them seas," replied my companion. "Why, boy, sometimes the fiercest storm is brewin' behind the greatest calm. An' the worst o' the thing is that it comes so sudden at times, that the masts are torn out o' the ship before you can say Jack Robinson."

"What! and without any warning?" said I.

"Ay, *almost* without warnin'; but not *altogether* without it. You heer'd the captain say he'd go an' take a squint at the glass?"

"Yes; what is the glass?"

"It's not a glass o' grog, you may be sure; nor yet a lookin'-glass. It's the weather-glass, boy. Shore-goin' chaps call it a barometer."

"And what's the meaning of barometer?" I inquired earnestly.

Tom Lokins stared at me in stupid amazement. "Why, boy," said he, "you're too inquisitive. I once asked the doctor o' a ship that question, and says he to me, 'Tom,' says he, 'a barometer is a glass tube filled with quicksilver or mercury, which is a metal in a soft or fluid state, like water, you know, and it's meant for tellin' the state o' the weather.'"

"'Yes, sir,' I answers, 'I know that well enough.'

"'Then why did you ask?' says he, gittin' into a passion.

"'I asked what was the meanin' o' the *word* barometer, sir,' said I.

"The doctor he looked grave at that, and shook his head. 'Tom,' says he, 'if I was to go for to explain that word, and all about the instrument, in a scientific sort o' way, d'ye see, I'd have to sit here an' speak to you right on end for six hours or more.'

"'Oh, sir,' says I, 'don't do it, then. *Please*, don't do it.'

"'No more I will,' says he; 'but it'll serve your turn to know that a barometer is a glass for measurin' the weight o' the air, and, *somehow or other*, *that* lets ye know wots a-coming.' If the mercury in the glass rises high, all's right. If it falls uncommon low very sudden, look out for squalls; that's all. No matter how smooth the sea may be, or how sweetly all natur' may smile, don't you believe it; take in every inch o' canvas at once.'

"That was a queer explanation, Tom."

"Ay, but it was a true one, as you shall see before long."

As I looked out upon the calm sea, which lay like a sheet of glass, without a ripple on its surface, I could scarcely believe what he had said. But before many minutes had passed I was convinced of my error.

While I was standing talking to my messmate, the captain rushed on deck, and shouted—

"All hands tumble up! Shorten sail! Take in every rag! Look alive, boys, look alive!"

I was quite stunned for a moment by this, and by the sudden tumult that followed. The men, who seemed never to take thought about anything, and who had but one duty, namely, to *obey orders*, ran upon deck, and leaped up the rigging like cats;

the sheets of nearly all the principal sails were clewed up, and, ere long, the canvas was made fast to the yards. A few of the smaller sails only were left exposed, and even these were close-reefed. Before long a loud roar was heard, and in another minute the storm burst upon us with terrific violence. The ship at first lay over so much that the masts were almost in the water, and it was as impossible for any one to walk the deck as to walk along the side of a wall. At the same time, the sea was lashed into white foam, and the blinding spray flew over us in bitter fury.

"Take in the topsails!" roared the captain. But his voice was drowned in the shriek of the gale. The men were saved the risk of going out on the yards, however, for in a few moments more all the sails, except the storm-try-sail, were burst and blown to ribbons.

We now tried to put the ship's head to the wind and "*lay to*," by which landsmen will understand that we tried to face the storm, and remain stationary. But the gale was so fierce that this was impossible. The last rag of sail was blown away, and then there was nothing left for us but to show our stern to the gale, and "scud under bare poles."

The great danger now was that we might be "pooped," which means that a huge wave might curl over our stern, fall with terrible fury on our deck, and sink us.

Many and many a good ship has gone down in this way; but we were mercifully spared. As our safety depended very much on good steering, the captain himself took the wheel, and managed the ship so well, that we weathered the gale without damage, farther than the loss of a few sails and light spars. For two days the storm howled furiously, the sky and sea were like ink, with sheets of rain and foam driving through the air, and raging billows tossing our ship about like a cork.

During all this time my shipmates were quiet and grave, but active and full of energy, so that every order was at once obeyed without noise or confusion. Every man watched the slightest motion of the captain. We all felt that everything depended on him.

As for me, I gave up all hope of being saved. It seemed impossible to me that anything that man could build could withstand so terrible a storm. I do not pretend to say that I was not afraid. The near prospect of a violent death caused my heart to sink more than once; but my feelings did not unman me. I did my duty quietly, but quickly, like the rest; and when I had no work to do, I stood holding on to the weather stanchions, looking at the raging sea, and think of my mother, and of the words of kindness and counsel she had so often bestowed upon me in vain.

The storm ceased almost as quickly as it began, and although the sea did not all at once stop the heavings of its angry bosom, the wind fell entirely in the course of a few hours, the dark clouds broke up into great masses that were piled up high into the sky, and out of the midst of these the glorious sun shone in bright rays down on the ocean, like comfort from heaven, gladdening our hearts as we busily repaired the damage that we had suffered from the storm.

CHAPTER III.

OUR FIRST BATTLE.

I SHALL never forget the surprise I got the first time I saw a whale.

It was in the forenoon of a most splendid day, about a week after we arrived at that part of the ocean where we might expect to find fish. A light nor'-east breeze was blowing, but it scarcely ruffled the sea, as we crept slowly through the water with every stitch of canvas set.

As we had been looking out for fish for some time past, everything was in readiness for them. The boats were hanging over the side ready to lower, tubs for coiling away the ropes, harpoons, lances, etc., all were ready to throw in, and start away at a moment's notice. The man in the "crow's nest," as they call the cask fixed up at the masthead, was looking anxiously out for whales, and the crew were idling about the deck. Tom Lokins was seated on the windlass smoking his pipe, and I was sitting beside him on an empty cask, sharpening a blubber-knife.

"Tom," said I, "what like is a whale?"

"Why, it's like nothin' but itself," replied Tom, looking puzzled. "Why, wot a queer feller you are to ax questions."

"I'm sure you've seen plenty of them. You might be able to tell what a whale is like."

"Wot it's like! Well, it's like a tremendous big bolster with a head and a tail to it."

"And how big is it?"

"They're of all sizes, lad. I've seen one that was exactly equal to three hundred fat bulls, and its rate of goin' would take it round the whole world in twenty-three days."

"I don't believe you," said I, laughing.

"Don't you?" cried Tom; "it's a fact notwithstandin', for the captain himself said so, and that's how I came to know it."

Just as Tom finished speaking, the man in the crow's nest roared at the top of his voice, "There she blows!"

That was the signal that a whale was in sight, and as it was the first time we had heard it that season, every man in the ship was thrown into a state of tremendous excitement.

"There she blows!" roared the man again.

"Where away?" shouted the captain.

"About two miles right a-head."

In another moment the utmost excitement prevailed on board. Suddenly, while I was looking

over the side, straining my eyes to catch a sight of the whale, which could not yet be seen by the men on deck, I saw a brown object appear in the sea, not twenty yards from the side of the ship; before I had time to ask what it was, a whale's head rose to the surface, and shot up out of the water. The part of the fish that was visible above water could not have been less than thirty feet in length. It just looked as if our longboat had jumped out of the sea, and he was so near that I could see his great mouth quite plainly. I could have tossed a biscuit on his back easily. Sending two thick spouts of frothy water out of his blow-holes forty feet into the air with tremendous noise, he fell flat upon the sea with a clap like thunder, tossed his flukes or tail high into the air, and disappeared.

I was so amazed at this sight that I could not speak. I could only stare at the place where the huge monster had gone down.

"Stand by to lower," shouted the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the men, leaping to their appointed stations; for every man in a whaleship has his post of duty appointed to him, and knows what to do when an order is given.

"Lower away," cried the captain, whose face was now blazing with excitement.

In a moment more three boats were in the water; the tubs, harpoons, etc., were thrown in,

the men seized the oars, and away they went with a cheer. I was in such a state of flutter that I scarce knew what I did; but I managed somehow or other to get into a boat, and as I was a strong fellow, and a good rower, I was allowed to pull.

"There she blows!" cried the man in the crow's nest, just as we shot from the side of the ship. There was no need to ask, "where away" this time. Another whale rose and spouted not more than three hundred yards off, and before we could speak a third fish rose in another direction, and we found ourselves in the middle of what is called a "school of whales."

"Now, lads," said the captain, who steered the boat in which I rowed, "bend your backs, my hearties; that fish right a-head of us is a hundred-barrel whale for certain. Give way, boys; we *must* have that fish."

There was no need to urge the men, for their backs were strained to the utmost, their faces were flushed, and the big veins in their necks swelled almost to bursting, with the tremendous exertion.

"Hold hard," said the captain in a low voice, for now that we were getting near our prey, we made as little noise as possible.

The men at once threw their oars "apeak," as they say; that is, raised them straight up in

the air, and waited for further orders. We expected the whale would rise near to where we were, and thought it best to rest and look out.

While we were waiting, Tom Lokins, who was harpooneer of the boat, sat just behind me with all his irons ready. He took this opportunity to explain to me that by a "hundred barrel fish" is meant a fish that will yield a hundred barrels of oil. He further informed me that such a fish was a big one, though he had seen a few in the North-West Seas that had produced upwards of two hundred barrels.

I now observed that the other boats had separated, and each had gone after a different whale. In a few minutes the fish we were in chase of rose a short distance off, and sent up two splendid water-spouts high into the air, thus showing that he was what the whalers call a "right" whale. It is different from the sperm whale, which has only one blow-hole, and that a little one.

We rowed towards it with all our might, and as we drew near, the captain ordered Tom Lokins to "stand up," so he at once laid in his oar, and took up the harpoon. The harpoon is an iron lance with a barbed point. A whale-line is attached to it, and this line is coiled away in a tub. When we were within a few yards of the fish, which was going slowly through the water, all

ignorant of the terrible foes who were pursuing him, Tom Lokins raised the harpoon high above his head, and darted it deep into its fat side just behind the left fin, and next moment the boat ran aground on the whale's back.

"Stern all, for your lives!" roared the captain, who, before his order was obeyed, managed to give the creature two deep wounds with his lance. The lance has no barbs to its point, and is used only for wounding after the harpoon is fixed.

The boat was backed off at once, but it had scarcely got a few yards away when the astonished fish whirled its huge body half out of the water, and, coming down with a tremendous clap, made off like lightning.

The line was passed round a strong piece of wood called the "logger-head," and, in running out, it began to smoke, and nearly set the wood on fire. Indeed, it would have done so, if a man had not kept constantly pouring water upon it. It was needful to be very cautious in managing the line, for the duty is attended with great danger. If any hitch should take place, the line is apt to catch the boat and drag it down bodily under the waves. Sometimes a coil of it gets round a leg or an arm of the man who attends to it, in which case his destruction is almost certain. Many a poor fellow has lost his life in this way.

The order was now given to "hold on line." This was done, and in a moment our boat was cleaving the blue water like an arrow, while the white foam curled from her bows. I thought every moment we should be dragged under; but whenever this seemed likely to happen, the line was let run a bit, and the strain eased. At last the fish grew tired of dragging us, the line ceased to run out, and Tom hauled in the slack, which another man coiled away in its tub. Presently the fish rose to the surface, a short distance off our weather-bow.

"Give way, boys! spring your oars," cried the captain; "another touch or two with the lance, and that fish is ours."

The boat shot ahead, and we were about to dart a second harpoon into the whale's side, when it took to "sounding,"—which means, that it went straight down, head foremost, into the depths of the sea. At that moment Tom Lokins uttered a cry of mingled anger and disappointment. We all turned round and saw our shipmate standing with the slack line in his hand, and such an expression on his weather-beaten face, that I could scarce help laughing. The harpoon had not been well fixed; it had lost its hold, and the fish was now free!

"Gone!" exclaimed the captain, with a groan.

Assailed by a Sperm Whale.

I remember even yet the feeling of awful disappointment that came over me when I understood that we had lost the fish after all our trouble! I could almost have wept with bitter vexation. As for my comrades, they sat staring at each other for some moments quite speechless. Before we could recover from the state into which this misfortune had thrown us, one of the men suddenly shouted, "Hallo! there's the mate's boat in distress."

We turned at once, and, truly, there was no doubt of the truth of this, for, about half a mile off, we beheld our first mate's boat tearing over the sea like a small steamer. It was fast to a fish, and two oars were set up on end to attract our attention.

When a whale is struck, it sometimes happens that the whole of the line in a boat is run out. When this is about to occur, it becomes necessary to hold on as much as can be done without running the boat under the water, and an oar is set up on end to show that assistance is required, either from the ship or from the other boats. As the line grows less and less, another and another oar is hoisted to show that help must be sent quickly. If no assistance can be sent, the only thing that remains to be done is to cut the line and lose the fish; but a whale line, with its harpoon, is a very heavy loss, in addition to that

of the fish, so that whalers are tempted to hold on a little too long sometimes.

When we saw the mate's boat dashing away in this style, we forgot our grief at the loss of our whale in anxiety to render assistance to our comrades, and we rowed towards them as fast as we could. Fortunately the whale changed its course and came straight towards us, so that we ceased pulling, and waited till they came up. As the boat came on I saw the foam curling up on her bows as she leaped and flew over the sea. I could scarcely believe it possible that wood and iron could bear such a strain. In a few minutes they were almost abreast of us.

"You're holding too hard!" shouted the captain.

"Lines all out!" roared the mate.

They were past almost before these short sentences could be spoken. But they had not gone twenty yards ahead of us when the water rushed in over the bow, and before we could utter a word the boat and crew were gone. Not a trace of them remained! The horror of the moment had not been fully felt, however, when the boat rose to the surface keel up, and, one after another, the heads of the men appeared. The line had fortunately broken, otherwise the boat would have been lost, and the entire crew probably would have gone to the bottom with her.

We instantly pulled to the rescue, and were thankful to find that not a man was killed, though some of them were a little hurt, and all had received a terrible fright. We next set to work to right the upset boat, an operation which was not accomplished without much labour and difficulty.

Now, while we were thus employed, our third boat, which was in charge of the second mate, had gone after the whale that had caused us so much trouble, and when we had got the boat righted and began to look about us, we found that she was fast to the fish about a mile to leeward.

"Hurrah, lads!" cried the captain, "luck has not left us yet. Give way my hearties, pull like Britons! we'll get that fish yet."

We were all dreadfully done up by this time, but the sight of a boat fast to a whale restored us at once, and we pulled away as stoutly as if we had only begun the day's work. The whale was heading in the direction of the ship, and when we came up to the scene of action the second mate had just "touched the life;" in other words, he had driven the lance deep down into the whale's vitals. This was quickly known by jets of blood being spouted up through the blow-holes. Soon after, our victim went into its dying agonies, or, as whalemen say, "his flurry."

This did not last long. In a short time he rolled over dead. We fastened a line to his tail, the three boats took the carcass in tow, and, singing a lively song, we rowed away to the ship.

Thus ended our first battle with the whales.

CHAPTER IV.

"CUTTING IN THE BLUBBER" AND "TRYING OUT THE OIL."

THE scene that took place on board ship after we caught our first fish was most wonderful. We commenced the operation of what is called "cutting in," that is, cutting up the whale, and getting the fat or blubber hoisted in. The next thing we did was to "try out" the oil, or melt down the fat in large iron pots brought with us for this purpose; and the change that took place in the appearance of the ship and the men when this began was very remarkable.

When we left port our decks were clean, our sails white, our masts well scraped; the brass-work about the quarter-deck was well polished, and the men looked tidy and clean. A few hours after our first whale had been secured alongside all this was changed. The cutting up of the huge carcass covered the decks with oil and blood, making them so slippery that they had to be covered

with sand to enable the men to walk about. Then the smoke of the great fires under the melting pots begrimed the masts, sails, and cordage with soot. The faces and hands of the men got so covered with oil and soot that it would have puzzled any one to say whether they were white or black. Their clothes, too, became so dirty that it was impossible to clean them. But, indeed, whalemen do not much mind this. In fact, they take a pleasure in all the dirt that surrounds them, because it is a sign of success in the main object of their voyage. The men in a *clean* whale ship are never happy. When everything is filthy, and dirty, and greasy, and smoky, and black—decks, rigging, clothes, and persons—it is then that the hearty laugh and jest and song are heard as the crew work busily, night and day, at their rough but profitable labour.

The operations of "cutting in" and "trying out" were matters of great interest to me the first time I saw them.

After having towed our whale to the ship, cutting in was immediately begun. First, the carcass was secured near the head and tail with chains, and made fast to the ship; then the great blocks and ropes fastened to the main and foremast for hoisting in the blubber were brought into play. When all was ready, the captain and the two mates with Tom Lokins got upon the

whale's body, with long-handled sharp spades or digging-knives. With these they fell to work cutting off the blubber.

I was stationed at one of the hoisting ropes, and while we were waiting for the signal to "hoist away," I peeped over the side, and for the first time had a good look at the great fish. When we killed it, so much of its body was down in the water that I could not see it very clearly, but now that it was lashed at full length alongside the ship, and I could look right down upon it, I began to understand more clearly what a large creature it was. One thing surprised me much; the top of its head, which was rough and knotty like the bark of an old tree, was swarming with little crabs and barnacles, and other small creatures. The whale's head seemed to be their regular home! This fish was by no means one of the largest kind, but being the first I had seen, I fancied it must be the largest fish in the sea.

Its body was forty feet long, and twenty feet round at the thickest part. Its head, which seemed to me a great, blunt shapeless thing, like a clumsy old boat, was eight feet long from the tip to the blow-holes or nostrils; and these holes were situated on the back of the head, which at that part was nearly four feet broad. The entire head measured about twenty-one feet round. Its ears were two small holes, so small that it was

difficult to discover them, and the eyes were also very small for so large a body, being about the same size as those of an ox. The mouth was very large, and the under jaw had great ugly lips. When it was dying, I saw these lips close in once or twice on its fat cheeks, which it bulged out like the leather sides of a pair of gigantic bellows. It had two fins, one on each side, just behind the head. With these, and with its tail, the whale swims and fights. Its tail is its most deadly weapon. The flukes of this one measured thirteen feet across, and with one stroke of this it could have smashed our largest boat in pieces. Many a boat has been sent to the bottom in this way.

I remember hearing our first mate tell of a wonderful escape a comrade of his had in the Greenland Sea fishery. A whale had been struck, and, after its first run, they hauled up to it again, and rowed so hard that they ran the boat right against it. The harpooneer was standing on the bow all ready, and sent his iron cleverly into the blubber. In its agony the whale reared its tail high out of the water, and the flukes whirled for a moment like a great fan just above the harpooneer's head. One glance up was enough to show him that certain death was descending. In an instant he dived over the side and disappeared. Next moment the flukes came down on the part

of the boat he had just left, and cut it clean off; the other part was driven into the waves, and the men were left swimming in the water. They were all picked up, however, by another boat that was in company, and the harpooneer was recovered with the rest. His quick dive had been the saving of his life.

I had not much time given me to study the appearance of this whale before the order was given to "hoist away!" so we went to work with a will. The first part that came up was the huge lip, fastened to a large iron hook, called the blubber hook. It was lowered into the blubber-room between decks, where a couple of men were stationed to stow the blubber away. Then came the fins, and after them the upper-jaw, with the whalebone attached to it. The "right" whale has no teeth like the sperm whale. In place of teeth it has the well-known substance called whalebone, which grows from the roof of its mouth in a number of broad thin plates, extending from the back of the head to the snout. The lower edges of these plates of whalebone are split into thousands of hairs like bristles, so that the inside roof of a whale's mouth resembles an enormous blacking brush! The object of this curious arrangement is to enable the whale to catch the little shrimps and small sea-blubbers, called "medusæ," on which it feeds. I have spoken before of these last as

being the little creatures that gave out such a beautiful pale-blue light at night. The whale feeds on them. When he desires a meal he opens his great mouth and rushes into the midst of a shoal of medusæ; the little things get entangled in thousands among the hairy ends of the whalebone, and when the monster has got a large enough mouthful, he shuts his lower jaw and swallows what his net has caught.

The wisdom as well as the necessity of this arrangement is very plain. Of course, while dashing through the sea in this fashion, with his mouth agape, the whale must keep his throat closed, else the water would rush down it and choke him. Shutting his throat then, as he does, the water is obliged to flow out of his mouth as fast as it flows in; it is also spouted up through his blow-holes, and this with such violence that many of the little creatures would be swept out along with it but for the hairy-ended whalebone which lets the sea-water out, but keeps the medusæ in.

Well, let us return to our "cutting in." After the upper-jaw came the lower-jaw and throat, with the tongue. This last was an enormous mass of fat, about as large as an ox, and it weighed fifteen hundred or two thousand pounds. After this was got in, the rest of the work was simple. The blubber of the body was peeled off in great strips, beginning at the neck and being cut spirally

towards the tail. It was hoisted on board by the blocks, the captain and mates cutting, and the men at the windlass hoisting, and the carcass slowly turning round until we got an unbroken piece of blubber, reaching from the water to nearly as high as the mainyard-arm. This mass was nearly a foot thick, and it looked like fat pork. It was cut off close to the deck, and lowered into the blubber-room, where the two men stationed there attacked it with knives, cut it into smaller pieces, and stowed it away. Then another piece was hoisted on board in the same fashion, and so on we went till every bit of blubber was cut off; and I heard the captain remark to the mate when the work was done, that the fish was a good fat one, and he wouldn't wonder if it turned out to be worth £300.

Now, when this process was going on, a new point of interest arose which I had not thought of before, although my messmate, Tom Lokins, had often spoken of it on the voyage out. This was the arrival of great numbers of sea-birds.

Tom had often told me of the birds that always keep company with whalers; but I had forgotten all about it until I saw an enormous albatross come sailing majestically through the air towards us. This was the largest bird I ever saw, and no wonder, for it is the largest bird that flies. Soon after that, another arrived, and al-

though we were more than a thousand miles from any shore, we were speedily scented out and surrounded by hosts of gonies, stinkards, haglets, gulls, pigeons, petrels, and other sea-birds, which commenced to feed on pieces of the whale's carcass with the most savage gluttony. These birds were dreadfully greedy. They had stuffed themselves so full in the course of a short time, that they flew heavily and with great difficulty. No doubt they would have to take three or four days to digest that meal!

Sharks, too, came to get their share of what was going. But these savage monsters did not content themselves with what was thrown away; they were so bold as to come before our faces and take bites out of the whale's body. Some of these sharks were eight and nine feet long, and when I saw them open their horrid jaws, armed with three rows of glistening white sharp teeth, I could well understand how easily they could bite off the leg of a man, as they often do when they get the chance. Sometimes they would come right up on the whale's body with a wave, bite out great pieces of the flesh, turn over on their bellies, and roll off.

While I was looking over the side during the early part of that day, I saw a very large shark come rolling up in this way close to Tom Lokins' legs. Tom made a cut at him with his blubber-

spade, but the shark rolled off in time to escape the blow. And after all it would not have done him much damage, for it is not easy to frighten or take the life out of a shark.

"Hand me an iron and line, Bob," said Tom, looking up at me. "I've got a spite agin that feller. He's been up twice already. Ah! hand it down here, and two or three of ye stand by to hold on by the line. There he comes, the big villain!"

The shark came close to the side of the whale at that moment, and Tom sent the harpoon right down his throat.

"Hold on hard," shouted Tom.

"Ay, ay," replied several of the men as they held on to the line, their arms jerking violently as the savage fish tried to free itself. We quickly reeved a line through a block at the fore yard-arm, and hauled it on deck with much difficulty. The scene that followed was very horrible, for there was no killing the brute.* It threshed the deck with its tail, and snapped so fiercely with its tremendous jaws, that we had to keep a sharp look out lest it should catch hold of a leg. At last its tail was cut off, the body cut open, and all the entrails taken out, yet even after this it continued to flap and thresh about the deck for some time, and the heart continued to contract for

* See frontispiece.

twenty minutes after it was taken out and pierced with a knife.

I would not have believed this had I not seen it with my own eyes. In case some of my rea ers may doubt its truth, I would remind them how difficult it is to kill some of those creatures with which we are all familiar. The common worm, for instance, may be cut into a number of small pieces, and yet each piece remains alive for some time after.

The skin of the shark is valued by the whalemen, because, when cleaned and dry, t is as good as sand-paper, and is much used in polishing the various things they make out of whales' bones and teeth.

When the last piece of blubber had been cut off our whale, the great chain that held it to the ship's side was cast off, and the now useless ca cass sank like a stone, much to the sorrow of some of the smaller birds, which, having been driven away by their bigger comrades, had not fed so heartily as they wished perhaps! But what was loss to the gulls was gain to the sharks, which could follow the carcass down into the deep and devour it at their leisure.

"Now, lads," cried the mate, when the remains had vanished, "rouse up the fires, look alive, my hearties!"

"Ay, ay, sir," was the ready reply, cheerfully given, as every man sprang to his appointed duty.

And so, having "cut in" our whale, we next proceeded to "try out" the oil.

CHAPTER V.

A STORM, A MAN OVERBOARD, AND A RESCUE.

THE scenes in a whaleman's life are varied and very stirring. Sometimes he is floating on the calm ocean, idling about the deck and whistling for a breeze, when all of a sudden the loud cry is heard, "There she blows!" and in a moment the boats are in the water, and he is engaged in all the toils of an exciting chase. Then comes the battle with the great leviathan of the deep, with all its risks and dangers. Sometimes he is unfortunate, the decks are clean, he has nothing to do. At other times he is lucky, "cutting in" and "trying out" engage all his energies and attention. Frequently storms toss him on the angry deep, and show him, if he will but learn the lesson, how helpless a creature he is, and how thoroughly dependent at all times for life, safety, and success, upon the arm of God.

"Trying out" the oil, although not so thrilling a scene as many a one in his career, is, nevertheless, extremely interesting, especially at night.

when the glare of the fires in the try-works casts a deep red glow on the faces of the men, on the masts and sails, and even out upon the sea.

The try-works consisted of two huge melting-pots fixed upon brick-work fireplaces between the fore and main masts. While some of the men were down in the blubber-room cutting the "blanket-pieces," as the largest masses are called, others were pitching the smaller pieces on deck, where they were seized by two men who stood near a block of wood, called "a horse," with a mincing knife, to slash the junks so as to make them melt easily. These were then thrown into the melting-pots by one of the mates, who kept feeding the fires with such "scraps" of blubber as remain after the oil is taken out. Once the fires were fairly set agoing no other kind of fuel was required than "scraps" of blubber. As the boiling oil rose it was baled into copper cooling-tanks. It was the duty of two other men to dip it out of these tanks into casks, which were then headed up by our cooper, and stowed away in the hold.

As the night advanced the fires became redder and brighter by contrast, the light shone and glittered on the bloody decks, and, as we plied our dirty work, I could not help thinking, "what would my mother say, if she could get a peep at me now?"

The ship' crew worked and slept by watches,

for the fires were not allowed to go out all night. About midnight I sat down on the windlass to take a short rest, and began talking to one of the men, Fred Borders by name. He was one of the quietest and most active men in the ship, and, being quite a young man, not more than nineteen, he and I drew to one another, and became very intimate.

"I think we're goin' to have a breeze, Bob," said he, as a sharp puff of wind crossed the deck, driving the black smoke to leeward, and making the fire flare up in the try-works.

"I hope it won't be a storm, then," said I, "for it will oblige us to put out the fires."

Just then Tom Lokins came up, ordered Fred to go and attend to the fires, sat down opposite to me on the windlass, and began to "lay down the law" in regard to storms.

"You see, Bob Ledbury," said he, beginning to fill his pipe, "young fellers like you don't know nothin' about the weather—'cause why? you've got no experience. Now, I'll put you up to a dodge consarning this very thing."

I never found out what was the dodge that Tom, in his wisdom, was to have put me up to, for at that moment the captain came on deck, and gave orders to furl the top-gallant sails.

Three or four of us ran up the rigging like monkeys, and in a few minutes the sails were lashed to the yards.

The wind now began to blow steadily from the nor'-west; but not so hard as to stop our try-works for more than an hour. After that it blew stiff enough to raise a heavy sea, and we were compelled to slack the fires. This was all the harm it did to us, however, for although the breeze was stiffish, it was nothing like a gale.

As the captain and the first mate walked the quarter-deck together, I heard the former say to the latter, "I think we had as well take in a reef in the topsails. All hereabouts the fishing-ground is good, we don't need to carry on."

The order was given to reduce sail, and the men lay out on the topsail yards. I noticed that my friend Fred Borders was the first man to spring up the shrouds and lay out on the main-top-sail yard. It was so dark that I could scarcely see the masts. While I was gazing up, I thought I observed a dark object drop from the yard; at the same moment there was a loud shriek, followed by a plunge in the sea. This was succeeded by the sudden cry, "man over-board!" and instantly the whole ship was in an uproar.

No one who has not heard that cry can under-stand the dreadful feelings that are raised in the human breast by it. My heart at first seemed to leap into my mouth, and almost choke me. Then a terrible fear, which I cannot describe, shot

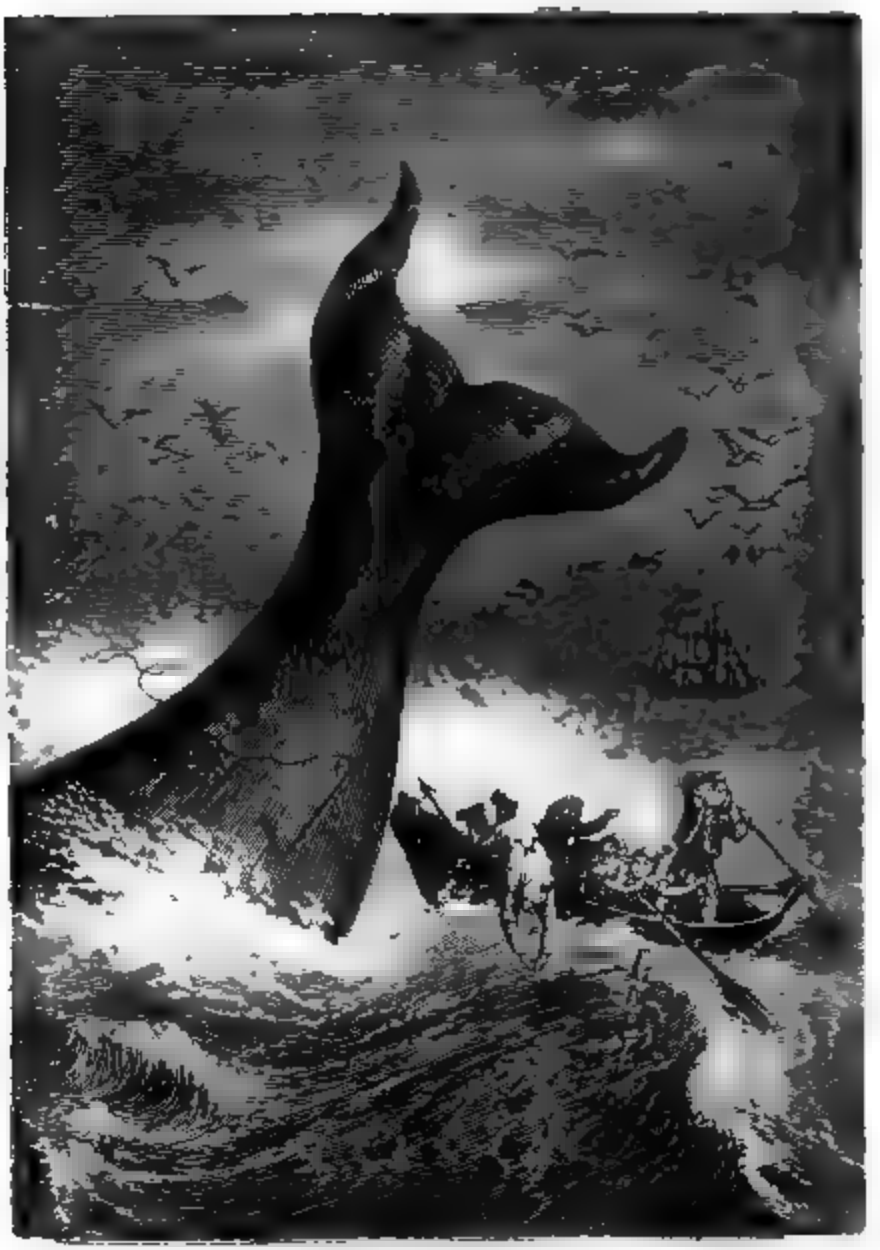
through me, when I thought it might be my comrade Fred Borders. But these thoughts and feelings passed like lightning—in a far shorter time than it takes to write them down. The shriek was still ringing in my ears, when the captain roared—

"Down your helm! stand by to lower away the boats."

At the same moment he seized a light hen-coop and tossed it overboard, and the mate did the same with an oar in the twinkling of an eye. Almost without knowing what I did, or why I did it, I seized a great mass of oakum and rubbish that lay on the deck saturated with oil, I thrust it into the embers of the fire in the try-works, and hurled it blazing into the sea.

The ship's head was thrown into the wind, and we were brought to as quickly as possible. A gleam of hope arose within me on observing that the mass I had thrown overboard continued still to burn; but when I saw how quickly it went astern, notwithstanding our vigorous efforts to stop the ship, my heart began to sink, and when, a few moments after, the light suddenly disappeared, despair seized upon me, and I gave my friend up for lost.

At that moment, strange to say, thoughts of my mother came into my mind, I remembered her words, "Call upon the Lord, my dear boy, when



A Dive for Life.

"Where away?" cried every one eagerly.

"Right off the lee-bow—there, don't you see it?"

At that moment a faint cry came floating over the black water, and died away in the breeze.

The single word "Hurrah!" burst from our throats with all the power of our lungs, and we bent to our oars till we wellnigh tore the rollicks out of the boat.

"Hold hard! stern all!" roared the mate, as we went flying down to leeward, and almost ran over the hen-coop, to which a human form was seen to be clinging with the tenacity of a drowning man. We had swept down so quickly, that we shot past it. In an agony of fear lest my friend should be again lost in the darkness, I leaped up and sprang into the sea. Tom Lokins, however, had noticed what I was about; he seized me by the collar of my jacket just as I reached the water, and held me with a grip like a vice till one of the men came to his assistance, and dragged me back into the boat. In a few moments more we reached the hen-coop, and Fred was saved!

He was half dead with cold and exhaustion, poor fellow, but in a few minutes he began to recover, and before we reached the ship he could speak. His first words were to thank God for his deliverance. Then he added—

"And, thanks to the man that flung that light

overboard. I should have gone down but for that. It showed me where the hen-coop was."

I cannot describe the feeling of joy that filled my heart when he said this.

"Ay, who wos it that throw'd that fire overboard?" inquired one of the men.

"Don't know," replied another, "I think it wos the cap'n."

"You'll find that out when we get aboard," cried the mate; "pull away, lads."

In five minutes Fred Borders was passed up the side and taken down below. In two minutes more we had him stripped naked, rubbed dry, wrapped in hot blankets, and set down on one of the lockers, with a hot brick at his feet, and a stiff can of hot rum and water in his hand.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHALE—FIGHTING BULLS, ETC.

AS the reader may, perhaps, have been asking a few questions about the whale in his own mind, I shall try to answer them, by telling a few things concerning that creature which, I think, are worth knowing.

In the first place, the whale is not a fish! I have applied that name to it, no doubt, because it is the custom to do so; but there are great differences between the whales and the fishes. The mere fact that the whale lives in water is not sufficient to prove it to be a fish. The frog lives very much in water—he is born in the water, and, when very young, he lives in it altogether—would die, in fact, if he were taken out of it; yet a frog is not a fish.

The following are some of the differences existing between a whale and a fish:—The whale is a warm-blooded animal; the fish is cold-blooded. The whale brings forth its young alive; while most fishes lay eggs or spawn. Moreover, the

fish lives entirely under water, but the whale cannot do so. He breathes air through enormous lungs, not gills. If you were to hold a whale's head under water for much longer than an hour, it would certainly be drowned; and this is the reason why it comes so frequently to the surface of the sea to take breath. Whales seldom stay more than an hour under water, and when they come up to breathe, they discharge the last breath they took through their nostrils or blow-holes, mixed with large quantities of water which they have taken in while feeding. But the most remarkable point of difference between the whale and fishes of all kinds is, that it suckles its young.

The calf of one kind of whale is about fourteen feet long when it is born, and it weighs about a ton. The cow-whale usually brings forth only one calf at a time, and the manner in which she behaves to her gigantic baby shows that she is affected by feelings of anxiety and affection such as are never seen in fishes, which heartless creatures forsake their eggs when they are laid, and I am pretty sure they would not know their own children if they happened to meet with them.

The whale, on the contrary, takes care of her little one, gives it suck, and sports playfully with it in the waves; its enormous heart throbbing all the while, no doubt, with satisfaction.

I have heard of a whale which was once driven

into shoal water with its calf and nearly stranded. The huge dam seemed to become anxious for the safety of her child, for she was seen to swim eagerly round it, embrace it with her fins, and roll it over in the waves, trying to make it follow her into deep water. But the calf was obstinate; it would not go, and the result was that the boat of a whaler pulled up and harpooned it. The poor little whale darted away like lightning on receiving the terrible iron, and ran out a hundred fathoms of line; but it was soon overhauled and killed. All this time the dam kept close to the side of its calf, and not until a harpoon was plunged into her own side would she move away. Two boats were after her. With a single rap of her tail she cut one of the boats in two, and then darted off. But in a short time she turned and came back. Her feelings of anxiety had returned, no doubt, after the first sting of pain was over, and she died at last close to the side of her young one.

There are various kinds of whales, but the two sorts that are most sought after are the common whale of the Greenland Seas, which is called the "right whale," and the sperm whale of the South Sea. Both kinds are found in the south; but the sperm whale never goes to the North Seas. Both kinds grow to an enormou also—sometimes to seventy feet in length, t

there is considerable difference in their appearance, especially about the head. In a former chapter I have partly described the head of a *right* whale, which has whalebone instead of teeth, with its blow-holes on the back of the head. The sperm whale has large white teeth in its lower jaw and none at all in the upper. It has only one blow-hole, and that a little one, much farther forward on its head, so that sailors can tell, at a great distance, what kind of whales they see simply by their manner of spouting.

The most remarkable feature about the sperm whale is the bluntness of its clumsy head, which looks somewhat like a big log with the end sawn square off, and this head is about one-third of its entire body.

The sperm whale feeds differently from the right whale. He seizes his prey with his powerful teeth, and lives, to a great extent, on large cuttle fish. Some of them have been seen to vomit lumps of these cuttle-fish as long as a whale-boat. He is much fiercer, too, than the right whale, which almost always takes to flight when struck, but the sperm whale will sometimes turn on its foes and smash their boat with a blow of his blunt head or tail.

Fighting-whales, as they are called, are not uncommon. These are generally old bulls, which have become wise from experience, and give the

whalers great trouble—sometimes carrying away several harpoons and lines. The lower jaw of one old bull of this kind was found to be sixteen feet long, and it had forty-eight teeth, some of them a foot long. A number of scars about his head showed that this fellow had been in the wars. When two bull-whales take to fighting, their great effort is to catch each other by the lower jaw, and, when locked together, they struggle with a degree of fury that cannot be described.

It is not often that the sperm whale actually attacks a ship; but there are a few cases of this kind which cannot be doubted. The following story is certainly true; and while it shows how powerful a creature the whale is, it also shows what terrible risk and sufferings the whaleman has frequently to encounter.

In the month of August 1819, the American whaleship "Essex" sailed from Nantucket for the Pacific Ocean. She was commanded by Captain Pollard. Late in the autumn of the same year, when in latitude 40° of the South Pacific, a shoal, or "school," of sperm whales were discovered, and three boats were immediately lowered and sent in pursuit. The mate's boat was struck by one of the fish during the chase, and it was found necessary to return to the ship to repair damages.

While the men were employed at this, an enormous whale suddenly rose quite close to the

ship. He was going at nearly the same rate with the ship—about three miles an hour; and the men, who were good judges of the size of whales, thought that it could not have been less than eighty-five feet long. All at once he ran against the ship, striking her bows, and causing her to tremble like a leaf. The whale immediately dived and passed under the ship, and grazed her keel in doing so. This evidently hurt his back, for he suddenly rose to the surface about fifty yards off, and commenced lashing the sea with his tail and fins as if suffering great agony. It was truly an awful sight to behold that great monster lashing the sea into foam at so short a distance.

In a short time he seemed to recover, and started off at great speed to windward. Meanwhile the men discovered that the blow received by the ship had done her so much damage, that she began to fill and settle down at the bows; so they rigged the pumps as quickly as possible. While working them one of the men cried out—

"God have mercy! he comes again!"

This was too true. The whale had turned, and was now bearing down on them at full speed, leaving a white track of foam behind him. Rushing at the ship like a battering-ram, he hit her fair on the weather bow and stove it in, after which he dived and disappeared. The horrified

men took to their boats at once, and in *ten minutes* the ship went down.

The condition of the men thus left in three open boats far out upon the sea, without provisions or shelter, was terrible indeed. Some of them perished, and the rest, after suffering the severest hardships, reached a low island called Ducies on the 20th of December. It was a mere sand-bank, which supplied them only with water and sea-fowl. Still even this was a mercy, for which they had reason to thank God; for in cases of this kind one of the evils that seamen have most cause to dread is the want of water.

Three of the men resolved to remain on this sand-bank, for, dreary and uninhabited though it was, they preferred to take their chance of being picked up by a passing ship rather than run the risks of crossing the wide ocean in open boats, so their companions bade them a sorrowful farewell, and left them. But this island is far out of the usual track of ships. The poor fellows have never since been heard of.

It was the 27th of December when the three boats left the sand-bank with the remainder of the men, and began a voyage of two thousand miles, towards the island of Juan Fernandez. The mate's boat was picked up, about three months after, by the ship "Indian" of London, with only

three living men in it. About the same time the captain's boat was discovered, by the "Dauphin" of Nantucket, with only two men living; and these unhappy beings had only sustained life by feeding on the flesh of their dead comrades. The third boat must have been lost, for it was never heard of; and out of the whole crew of twenty men, only five returned home to tell their eventful story.

Before resuming the thread of my narrative, I must not omit to mention, that in the head of the sperm whale there is a large cavity or hole called the "case," which contains pure oil that does not require to be melted, but can be bailed at once into casks and stowed away. This is the valuable spermaceti from which the finest candles are made. One whale will sometimes yield fifteen barrels of spermaceti oil from the "case" of its head. A large fish will produce from eighty to a hundred barrels of oil altogether, sometimes much more; and when whalemen converse with each other about the size of whales, they speak of "eighty-barrel fish," and so on.

Although I have written much about the fighting powers of the sperm whale, it must not be supposed that whales are by nature fond of fighting. On the contrary, the "right" whale is a timid creature, and never shows fight except in defence of its young. And the sperm whale generally

takes to flight when pursued. In fact, most of the accidents that happen to whalemen occur when the wounded monster is lashing the water in blind terror and agony.

The whale has three bitter enemies, much smaller, but much bolder than himself, and of these he is terribly afraid. They are—the sword-fish, the thrasher, and the killer. The first of these, the sword-fish, has a strong straight horn or sword projecting from his snout, with which he boldly attacks and pierces the whale. The thrasher is a strong fish, twenty feet long, and of great weight. Its method of attack is to leap out of the water on the whale's back, and deal it a tremendous blow with its powerful tail.

The sword-fish and thrasher sometimes act together in the attack; the first stabbing him below, and the second belabouring him above, while the whale, unable, or too frightened to fight, rushes through the water, and even leaps its whole gigantic length into the air in its endeavours to escape. When a whale thus leaps his whole length out of the water, the sailors say he "breaches," and breaching is a common practice. They seem to do it often for amusement as well as from terror.

But the most deadly of the three enemies is the killer. This is itself a kind of small whale, but it is wonderfully strong, swift, and bold.

When one of the killers gets into the middle of a school of whales, the frightened creatures are seen flying in all directions. His mode of attack is to seize his big enemy by the jaw, and hold on until he is exhausted and dies.

CHAPTER VII.

TOM'S WISDOM—ANOTHER GREAT BATTLE.

ONE day I was standing beside the windlass, listening to the conversation of five or six of the men, who were busy sharpening harpoons and cutting-knives, or making all kinds of toys and things out of whales' bones. We had just finished cutting in and trying out our third whale, and as it was not long since we reached the fishing-ground, we were in high hopes of making a good thing of it that season ; so that every one was in good spirits, from the captain down to the youngest man in the ship.

Tom Lokins was smoking his pipe, and Tom's pipe was an uncommonly black one, for he smoked it very often. Moreover, Tom's pipe was uncommonly short, so short that I always wondered how he escaped burning the end of his nose. Indeed, some of the men said that the redness of the end of Tom's nose was owing to its being baked like a brick by the heat of his pipe. Tom took this pipe from his mouth, and while he was pushing

down the tobacco with the end of his little finger, he said—

"D'ye know, lads, I've been thinkin'—"

"No, have ye?" cried one of the men interrupting him with a look of pretended surprise. "Well now, I do think, messmates, that we should ax the mate to make a note o' that in the log, for it's not often that Tom Lokins takes to thinkin'."

There was a laugh at this, but Tom, turning with a look of contempt to the man who interrupted him, replied—

"I'll tell you wot it is, Bill Blunt, if all the thoughts that *you* think, and especially the jokes that you utter, wos put down in the log, they'd be so heavy that I do believe they would sink the ship!"

"Well, well," cried Bill, joining in the laugh against himself, "if they did, *your* jokes would be so light and triflin' that I do believe they'd float her again. But what have you been a-thinkin' of, Tom?"

"I've been thinkin'," said Tom, slowly, "that if a whale makes his breakfast entirely off them little things that you can hardly see when you get 'em into a tumbler—I forget how the captain calls 'em—wot a *tree-mendous* heap of 'em he must eat in the course of a year!"

"Thousands of 'em, I suppose," said one of the men.

"Thousands!" cried Tom, "I should rather say billions of them."

"How much is billions, mate?" inquired Bill.

"I don't know," answered Tom. "Never could find out. You see it's heaps upon heaps of thousands, for the thousands come first and the billions afterwards; but when I've thought uncommon hard, for a long spell at a time, I always get confused, because millions comes in between, d'ye see, and that's puzzlin'."

"I think I could give you some notion about these things," said Fred Borders, who had been quietly listening all the time, but never putting in a word, for, as I have said, Fred was a modest bashful man and seldom spoke much. But we had all come to notice that when Fred spoke, he had always something to say worth hearing; and when he did speak he spoke out boldly enough. We had come to have feelings of respect for our young shipmate, for he was a kind-hearted lad, and we saw by his conversation that he had been better educated than the most of us, so all our tongues stopped as the eyes of the party turned on him.

"Come, Fred, let's hear it then," said Tom.

"It's not much I have to tell," began Fred, "but it may help to make your minds clearer on this subject. On my first voyage to the whale fishery (you know, lads, this is my second voyage) I went to the Greenland seas. We had a young

doctor aboard with us—quite a youth ; indeed he had not finished his studies at college, but he was cleverer, for all that, than many an older man that had gone through his whole course. I do believe that the reason of his being so clever was, that he was for ever observing things, and studying them, and making notes, and trying to find out reasons. He was never satisfied with knowing a thing ; he must always find out *why* it was. One day I heard him ask the captain what it was that made the sea so green in some parts of those seas. Our captain was an awfully stupid man. So long as he got plenty oil he didn't care two straws for the reason of anything. The young doctor had been bothering him that morning with a good many questions, so when he asked him what made the sea green, he answered sharply, "I suppose it makes itself green, young man," and then he turned from him with a fling.

"The doctor laughed, and came forward among the men, and began to tell us stories and ask questions. Ah ! he was a real hearty fellow ; he would tell you all kinds of queer things, and would pump you dry of all *you* knew in no time. Well, but the thing I was going to tell you was this. One of the men said to him he had heard that the greenness of the Greenland sea was caused by the little things like small bits of jelly on which the whales feed. As soon as he

heard this he got a bucket and hauled some sea water aboard, and for the next ten days he was never done working away with the sea-water; pouring it into tumblers and glasses; looking through it by daylight and by lamplight; tasting it, and boiling it, and examining it with a microscope."

"What's a microscope?" inquired one of the men.

"Don't you know?" said Tom Lokins; "why, it's a glass that makes little things seem big, when ye look through it. I've heerd say that beasts that are so uncommon small that you can't see them at all are made to come into sight and look quite big by means o' this glass. But I can't myself say that it's true."

"But I can," said Fred, "for I have seen it with my own eyes. Well, after a good while, I made bold to ask the young doctor what he had found out.

"I've found," said he, "that the greenness of these seas is in truth caused by uncountable numbers of medusæ—"

"Ha! that's the word," shouted Tom Lokins, "Medoosy, that's wot the captain calls 'em. Heave ahead, Fred."

"Well, then," continued Fred, "the young doctor went on to tell me that he had been counting the matter to himself very carefully, and he

found that in every square mile of sea-water there were living about eleven quadrillions nine hundred and ninety-nine trillions of these little creatures!"

"Oh! hallo! come now!" we all cried, opening our eyes very wide indeed.

"But, I say, how much is that?" inquired Tom Lokins.

"Ah! that's just what I said to the young doctor, and he said to me, 'I'll tell you what, Fred Borders, no man alive understands how much that is, and what's more, no man ever will; but I'll give you *some notion* of what it means;' and so he told me how long it would take forty thousand men to count that number of eleven quadrillions nine hundred and ninety-nine trillions, each man of the forty thousand beginning 'one,' 'two,' 'three,' and going on till the sum of the whole added together would make it up. Now, how long d'ye think it would take them?—guess."

Fred Borders smiled as he said this, and looked round the circle of men.

"I know," cried one, "it would take the whole forty thousand *a week* to do it."

"Oh! nonsense, they could do it easy in two days," said another.

"That shows how little you know about big numbers," observed Tom Lokins, knocking the ashes out of his pipe. "I'm pretty sure it

couldn't be done in much less than six months; workin' hard all day, and makin' allowance for only one hour off for dinner."

"You're all wrong, shipmates," said Fred Borders. "That young doctor told me that if they'd begun work at the day of creation they would only have just finished the job last year!"

"O gammon! you're jokin'," cried Bill Blunt.

"No, I'm not, said Fred, for I was told afterwards by an old clergyman that the young doctor was quite right, and that any one who was good at 'rithmetic could work the thing out for himself in less than half-an-hour."

Just as Fred said this there came a loud cry from the mast-head that made us all spring to our feet like lightning.

"There she blows! There she breaches!"

The captain was on deck in a moment.

"Where away?" he cried.

"On the lee beam, sir. Sperm whale, about two miles off. There she blows!"

Every man was at his station in a moment; for, after being some months out, we became so used to the work, that we acted together like a piece of machinery. But our excitement never abated in the least.

"Sing out when the ship heads for her."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Keep her away!" said the captain to the

man at the helm. "Bob Ledbury, hand me the spy-glass."

"Steady," from the mast head.

"Steady it is," answered the man at the helm.

While we were all looking eagerly out ahead we heard a thundering snore behind us, followed by a heavy splash. Turning quickly round, we saw the flukes of an enormous whale sweeping through the air not more than six hundred yards astern of us.

"Down your helm," roared the captain; "haul up the mainsail, and square the yards. Call all hands."

"All hands, ahoy!" roared Bill Blunt in a voice of thunder, and in another moment every man in the ship was on deck.

"Hoist and swing the boats," cried the captain. "Lower away."

Down went the boats into the water; the men were into their places almost before you could wink, and we pulled away from the ship just as the whale rose the second time, about half a mile away to leeward.

From the appearance of this whale we felt certain that it was one of the largest we had yet seen, so we pulled after it with right good will. I occupied my usual place in the captain's boat, next the bow oar, just beside Tom Lokins, who was ready with his harpoons in the bow. Young Borders pulled the oar directly in front of me.

The captain himself steered, and, as our crew was a picked one, we soon left the other two boats behind us.

Presently a small whale rose close beside us, and, sending a shower of spray over the boat, went down in a pool of foam. Before we had time to speak, another whale rose on the opposite side of the boat, and then another on our starboard bow. We had got into the middle of a shoal of whales, which commenced leaping and spouting all round us, little aware of the dangerous enemy that was so near.

In a few minutes more up comes the big one again that we had first seen. He seemed very active and wild. After blowing on the surface once or twice, about a quarter of a mile off, he peaked his flukes, and pitched down head foremost.

"Now, then, lads, he's down for a long dive," said the captain; "spring your oars like men, we'll get that fish for certain, if you'll only pull."

The captain was mistaken; the whale had only gone down deep in order to come up and breach, or spring out of the water, for the next minute he came up not a hundred yards from us, and leaped his whole length into the air.

A shout of surprise broke from the men, and no wonder, for this was the largest fish I ever saw

or heard of, and he came up so clear of the water that we could see him from head to tail as he turned over, in the air, exposing his white belly to view, and came down on his great side with a crash like thunder, that might have been heard six miles off. A splendid mass of pure white spray burst from the spot where he fell, and in another moment he was gone.

"I do believe it's *New Zealand Tom*," cried Bill Blunt, referring to an old bull whale that had become famous among the men who frequented these seas for its immense size and fierceness, and for the great trouble it had given them, smashing some of their boats, and carrying away many of their harpoons.

"I don't know whether it's New Zealand Tom or not," said the captain, "but it's pretty clear that he's an old sperm bull. Give way, lads, we must get that whale whatever it should cost us."

We did not need a second bidding; the size of the fish was so great that we felt more excited than we had yet been during the voyage, so we bent our oars till we almost pulled the boat out of the water. The other boats had got separated, chasing the little whales, so we had this one all to ourselves.

"There she blows!" said Tom Lokins in a low voice, as the fish came up a short distance astern of us.

We had overshot our mark, so, turning about, we made for the whale, which kept for a considerable time near the top of the water, spouting now and then, and going slowly to windward. We at last got within a few feet of the monster, and the captain suddenly gave the word, "Stand up."

This was to our harpooneer, Tom Lokins, who jumped up on the instant, and buried two harpoons deep in the blubber.

"Stern all!" was the next word, and we backed off with all our might. It was just in time, for, in his agony, the whale tossed his tail right over our heads, the flukes were so big that they could have completely covered the boat, and he brought them down flat on the sea with a clap that made our ears tingle, while a shower of spray drenched us to the skin. For one moment I thought it was all over with us, but we were soon out of immediate danger, and lay on our oars watching the writhings of the wounded monster as he lashed the ocean into foam. The water all round us soon became white like milk, and the foam near the whale was red with blood.

Suddenly this ceased, and, before we could pull up to lance him, he went down, taking the line out at such a rate that the boat spun round, and sparks of fire flew from the loggerhead from the chafing of the rope.

"Hold on!" cried the captain, and next moment we were tearing over the sea at a fearful rate, with a bank of white foam rolling before us, high above our bows, and away on each side of us like the track of a steamer, so that we expected it every moment to rush in-board and swamp us. I had never seen anything like this before. From the first I had a kind of feeling that some evil would befall us.

While we were tearing over the water in this way, we saw the other whales coming up every now and then and blowing quite near to us, and presently we passed close enough to the first mate's boat to see that he was fast to a fish, and unable, therefore, to render us help if we should need it.

In a short time the line began to slack, so we hauled it in hand over hand, and Tom Lokins coiled it away in the tub in the stern of the boat, while the captain took his place in the bow to be ready with the lance. The whale soon came up, and we pulled with all our might towards him. Instead of making off again, however, he turned round and made straight at the boat. I now thought that destruction was certain, for, when I saw his great blunt forehead coming down on us like a steamboat, I felt that we could not escape. I was mistaken. The captain received him on the point of his lance, and the whale has such a dis-

like to pain, that even a small prick will sometimes turn him.

For some time we kept dodging round this fellow; but he was so old and wise, that he always turned his head to us, and prevented us from getting a chance to lance him. At last he turned a little to one side, and the captain plunged the lance deep into his vitals.

"Ha! that's touched his life," cried Tom, as a stream of blood flew up from his blow-holes, a sure sign that he was mortally wounded. But he was not yet conquered. After receiving the cruel stab with the lance, he pitched right down, head foremost, and once more the line began to fly out over the bow. We tried to hold on, but he was going so straight down that the boat was almost swamped, and we had to slack off to prevent our being pulled under water.

Before many yards of the line had run out, one of the coils in the tub became entangled.

"Look out, lads," cried Tom, and at once throwing the turn off the logger-head, he made an attempt to clear it. The captain, in trying to do the same thing, slipped and fell. Seeing this, I sprang up, and, grasping the coil as it flew past, tried to clear it. Before I could think, a turn whipped round my left wrist. I felt a wrench as if my arm had been torn out of the socket, and in a moment I was overboard, going down with almost

lightning speed into the depths of the sea. Strange to say, I did not lose my presence of mind. I knew exactly what had happened. I felt myself rushing down, down, down, with terrific speed; a stream of fire seemed to be whizzing past my eyes; there was a dreadful pressure on my brain, and a roaring as if of thunder in my ears. Yet, even in that dread moment, thoughts of eternity, of my sins, and of meeting with my God, flashed into my mind, for thought is quicker than the lightning flash.

Of a sudden the roaring ceased, and I felt myself buffetting the water fiercely in my efforts to reach the surface. I know not how I got free, but I suppose the turn of the line must have slackened off somehow. All this happened within the space of a few brief moments; but, oh! they seemed fearfully long to me. I do not think I could have held my breath a second longer.

When I came to the surface, and tried to look about me, I saw the boat not more than fifty yards off, and, being a good swimmer, I struck out for it, although I felt terribly exhausted. In a few minutes my comrades saw me, and, with a cheer, put out the oars and began to row towards me. I saw that the line was slack, and that they were hauling it in—a sign that the whale had ceased running and would soon come to the surface again. Before they had pulled half-a-dozen strokes I saw

the water open close beside the boat, and the monstrous head of the whale shot up like a great rock rising out of the deep.

He was not more than three feet from the boat, and he came up with such force, that more than half his gigantic length came out of the water right over the boat. I heard the captain's loud cry—"*Stern all!*" But it was too late, the whole weight of the monster's body fell upon the boat; there was a crash and a terrible cry, as the whale and boat went down together.

For a few moments he continued to lash the sea in his fury, and the fragments of the boat floated all round him. I thought that every man, of course, had been killed; but one after another their heads appeared in the midst of blood and foam, and they struck out for oars and pieces of the wreck.

Providentially, the whale, in his tossings, had shot a little away from the spot, else every man must certainly have been killed.

A feeling of horror filled my heart, as I beheld all this, and thought upon my position. Fortunately, I had succeeded in reaching a broken plank; for my strength was now so much exhausted, that I could not have kept my head above water any longer without its assistance. Just then I heard a cheer, and the next time I rose on the swell, I looked quickly round and saw

the mate's boat making for the scene of action as fast as a stout and willing crew could pull. In a few minutes more I was clutched by the arm and hauled into it. My comrades were next rescued, and we thanked God when we found that none were killed, although one of them had got a leg broken, and another an arm twisted out of joint. They all, however, seemed to think that my escape was much more wonderful than theirs; but I cannot say that I agreed with them in this.

We now turned our attention to the whale, which had dived again. As it was now loose, we did not know, of course, where it would come up: so we lay still awhile. Very soon up he came, not far from us, and as fierce as ever.

"Now, lads, we *must* get that whale," cried the mate; "give way with a will."

The order was obeyed. The boat almost leaped over the swell, and, before long, another harpoon was in the whale's back.

"Fast again, hurrah!" shouted the mate, "now for the lance."

He gave the monster two deep stabs while he spoke, and it vomited up great clots of blood, besides spouting the red stream of life as it rolled on the sea in its agony, obliging us to keep well out of its way.

I could not look upon the dying struggles of this enormous fish without feelings of regret and

self-reproach for helping to destroy it. I felt almost as if I were a murderer, and that the Creator would call me to account for taking part in the destruction of one of his grandest living creatures. But the thought passed quickly from my mind as the whale became more violent and went into its flurry. It began to lash the sea with such astonishing violence, that all the previous struggles seemed as nothing. The water all round became white like milk, with great streaks of red blood running through it, and the sound of the quick blows of its tail and fins resembled that of dull hollow thunder. We gazed at this scene in deep silence and with beating hearts.

All at once the struggles ceased. The great carcass rolled over belly up, and lay extended on the sea in death. To me it seemed as if a dead calm had suddenly fallen around us, after a long and furious storm, so great was the change when that whale at length parted with its huge life. The silence was suddenly broken by three hearty cheers, and then, fastening a rope to our prize, we commenced towing it to the ship, which operation occupied us the greater part of the night, for we had no fewer than eight miles to pull.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEATH ON THE SEA.

THE whale which we had taken, as I have related in the last chapter, was our largest fish of that season. It produced ninety barrels of oil, and was worth about £500, so that we did not grieve much over the loss of our boat.

But our next loss was of a kind that could not be made up for by oil or money, for it was the loss of a human life. In the whale-fishery men must, like soldiers, expect to risk their lives frequently, and they have too often, alas ! to mourn over the loss of a shipmate or friend. Up to this time our voyage had gone prosperously. We had caught so many fish that nearly half our cargo was already completed, and if we should be as lucky the remainder of the voyage, we should be able to return home to Old England much sooner than we had expected.

Of course, during all this time we had met with some disappointments, for I am not describing everything that happened on that voyage. It

would require a much thicker volume than this to tell the half of our adventures. We lost five or six fish by their sinking before we could get them made fast to the ship, and one or two bolted so fast that they broke loose and carried away a number of harpoons and many a fathom of line. But such misfortunes were what we had to look for. Every whaler meets with similar changes of luck, and we did not expect to fare differently from our neighbours. These things did not cause us much regret beyond the time of their occurrence. But it was far otherwise with the loss that now befell us.

It happened on a Sunday forenoon. I was standing close to the starboard gangway early that morning, looking over the side into the calm water, for there was not a breath of wind, and talking to the first mate, who was a gruff, surly man, but a good officer, and kind enough in his way when everything went smooth with him. But things don't go very smooth generally in whaling life, so the mate was oftener gruff than sweet.

"Bob Ledbury," said he, "have you got your cutting-in gear in order? I've got a notion that we'll 'raise the oil' this day."

"All right, sir," said I; "you might shave yourself with the blubber-spades. That was a good fish we got last, sir, wasn't it?"

"Pretty good, though I've seen bigger."

"He gave us a deal of trouble, too," said I.

"Not so much as I've seen others give," said he. "When I was fishing in the Greenland seas we made fast to a whale that cost us I don't know how many hundred dollars." (You must know the first mate was a Yankee, and he reckoned everything in dollars.)

"How was that, sir?" asked I.

Well, it was something in this fashion. We were floating about in the North Atlantic one calm, hot day, just something like this, only it was the afternoon, not the morning. We were doing nothing, and whistling for a breeze, when, all of a sudden, up comes five or six whales all round the ship, as if they had spied her from the bottom of the sea, and had come up to have a squint at her. Of course the boats were manned at once, and in less than no time we were tearing after them like all alive. But them whales were pretty wildish, I guess. They kept us pullin' the best part of five hours before we got a chance at them. My boat was out of sight of the ship before we made fast to a regular snorer, a hundred-barreller at the least. The moment he felt the iron, away he went like the shot out of a gun; but he didn't keep it up long, for soon after another of our boats came up and made fast. Well, for some two or three hours we held fast, but could not haul on to him to use the lance, for the moment

we came close up alongside of his tail he peaked flukes and dived, then up again, and away as fast as ever. It was about noon before we touched him again; but by that time two more harpoons were made fast, and two other boats cast tow-lines aboard of us, and were hauled along. That was four boats, and more than sixteen hundred fathoms of line, besides four harpoons that was fast to that whale, and yet, for all that, he went ahead as fast as we could have rowed, takin' us along with him quite easy.

A breeze having sprung up, our ship over-hauled us in the course of the afternoon, and towards evening we sent a line on board, to see if that would stop the big fish, and the topsails were lowered, so as to throw some of the ship's weight on him, but the irons drew out with the strain. However, we determined to try it again. Another line was sent aboard about eight o'clock, and the topsails were lowered, but the line snapped immediately. Well, we held on to that whale the whole of that night, and at four o'clock next morning, just thirty-six hours after he was first struck, two fast lines were taken aboard the ship. The breeze was fresh, and against us, so the top-gallant sails were taken in, the courses hauled up, and the topsails clewed down, yet, I assure you, that whale towed the ship dead against the wind for an hour and a half at the rate of two miles an hour, and all the

while beating the water with his fins and tail, so that the sea was in a continual foam. We did not kill that fish till after forty hours of the hardest work I ever went through.

Some of my shipmates seemed to doubt the truth of this story; but, for my part, I believed it, because the mate was a grave, truthful man, though he was gruff, and never told lies, as far as I knew. Moreover, a case of the same kind happened, some years afterwards, to a messmate of mine, while he was serving aboard the "Royal Bounty," on the 28th of May 1817.

I know that some of the stories which I now tell must seem very wild and unlikely to landsmen; but those who have been to the whale-fishery will admit that I tell nothing but the truth, and if there are any of my readers who are still doubtful, I would say, go and read the works of Captain Scoresby. It is well known that this whaling captain was a truly religious man, who gave up the fishing, though it turned him in plenty of money, and became a minister of the gospel with a small income, so it is not likely that he would have told what was untrue. Well, in his works we find stories that are quite as remarkable as the one I have just told, some of them more so.

For instance, he tells us of one whale, in the Greenland seas, which was not killed till it had drawn out ten thousand four hundred and forty

yards, or about *six miles* of line, fastened to fifteen harpoons, besides taking one of the boats entirely under water, which boat was never seen again.

The mate told us two or three more stories, and a lot of us were gathered round him listening eagerly, for there is nothing Jack likes so much as a *good yarn*, when, all of a sudden, the man at the mast-head sang out that a large sperm whale was spouting away two points off the lee-bow. Of course we were at our posts in a moment, for whalers, generally, don't let the Lord's-day interfere with their work.

Now it happened that this was the first time we had chanced to see whales on a Sunday. Up to that time it had never entered into my head to think of objecting to do work on that day. It was the custom to obey orders, whatever these should be, on every day of the week alike, so I went like the rest to my usual station, without a thought upon the subject. To the surprise of every one, Fred Borders, instead of going to his post, went up to the captain, with a very red face, and, touching his cap, said—

"Please, sir, it is the Sabbath day. I—I—would rather not go after the whales to-day, sir."

Those of us who were within hearing opened our eyes in amazement, and some of the men laughed right out; but the captain looked sternly round, and ordered silence.

Now, although the captain was a kind man, and all through the voyage had let us do as little work as possible on Sunday, still he was not a religious man. In fact, he did not pretend to believe in the Bible at all; so when one of his crew went up to him in this way, and boldly objected to work, he flew into a violent passion.

"And, pray, may I ask why you would rather not go after whales *to-day?*" said he, trying to keep down his anger.

"Because, sir, God's word forbids working at our ordinary calling on His day," answered Fred, quietly.

I knew poor Fred's spirit well, and I could see from the expression of his face, and the heaving of his breast, how deeply he felt the sneers of his shipmates, and the contempt of his captain.

"Did you not know, when you shipped with me, that you would have to work on Sunday as well as on any other day?" demanded the captain.

"Yes, sir, I did; but I did not think so seriously as I now do. My life has been saved, as you know, but a short time ago, and God has opened my eyes to see that, as He is my Maker, and is constantly doing me good, and watching over me, the least that I can do for Him is to consider His wishes, and obey His orders."

The captain was a little softened by this; but

another laugh from one or two of the worst of our men fired him up again.

"Go, sir," said he, sternly, "go to your duty. It will be time enough for you to preach when you are appointed chaplain to this ship. Disobey my orders, if you dare!"

Young Borders hung his head, and, turning slowly away, went to his usual station, where the crew of the boat he belonged to were already standing.

"There she blows! there she breaches!" sung the look-out.

"Lower away!" roared the captain.

The boats were in the water, and the men on their seats in a moment; but Fred hesitated. He knew the stern laws that exist for the punishment of mutineers; but he thought of the far more terrible laws that exist for the punishment of sinners. God helped him, and he turned boldly round, and said respectfully—

"Sir, I cannot go—."

Before he could say another word, the captain, who was a very strong man, rushed at him, seized him by the neck, and hurled him over the side into the boat. In another moment we were away, and Fred, seeing that escape was now impossible, took his oar like the rest.

There was an attempt made by some of the men to laugh at the poor fellow, but it was quite

plain that the most of them regarded their young shipmate with greater respect than ever. As for me, I felt my heart drawn out to him more than ever, and only wished that I had the pluck to side with him openly. But although brave enough for fighting men and whales at that time, I had not courage to fight against my own cowardly spirit. However, the excitement of the chase soon turned all our thoughts away from what had just passed.

The whale we were after was a very large one, we could see that, for after two hours' hard pulling we got near enough to throw a harpoon, and after it was fixed he jumped clean out of the water. Then there was the usual battle. It was fierce and long; so long that I began to fear we would have to return empty handed to the ship. We put ten harpoons into him, one after another, and had a stiff run between the fixing of each.

It is astonishing the difference between the fish. One will give you no trouble at all. I have often seen a good big fellow killed in half-an-hour. Another will take you half a day, and perhaps you may lose him after all. The whale we were now after at last took to showing fight. He made two or three runs at the boat, but the mate, who was in command, pricked him off with the lance cleverly. At last we gave him a severe wound, and immediately he dived.

"That was into his life," remarked Tom Lokins, as we sat waiting for him to come up again. The captain's boat was close to ours, about ten yards off. We had not to wait long. The sudden stoppage and slacking off of all the lines showed that the whale was coming up. All at once I saw a dark object rising directly under the captain's boat. Before I could make out what it was, almost before I could think, the boat flew up into the air, as if a powder magazine had exploded beneath it. The whale had come up, and hit it with his head right on the keel, so that it was knocked into pieces, and the men, oars, harpoons, lances, and tackle shot up in confusion into the air.

Immediately after that the whale went into his flurry, but we paid no attention to him, in our anxiety to pick up our companions. They all came to the surface quickly enough, but while some made for the boats vigorously, others swam slowly and with pain, showing that they were hurt, while one or two floated, as if dead, upon the water.

Most of the men had escaped with only a few cuts and bruises, but one poor fellow was hauled out of the water with a leg broken, and another was so badly knocked about the head that it was a long time before he was again fit for duty. The worst case, however, was that of poor Fred

Borders. He had a leg broken, and a severe wound in the side from a harpoon which had been forced into the flesh over the barbs, so that we could hardly get it drawn out. We laid him in the stern of the boat, where he lay for some time insensible; but in a short time he revived, and spoke to us in a faint voice. His first words were:—

"I'm dying, messmates."

"Don't say that, Fred," said I, while my heart sank within me. "Cheer up, my boy, you'll live to be the death of many a whale yet. See, put your lips to this can—it will do you good."

He shook his head gently, being too weak to reply.

We had killed a big fish that day, and we knew that when he was "tried in" we should have completed our cargo; but there was no cheer given when the monster turned over on his side, and the pull to the ship that evening seemed to us the longest and heaviest we ever had, for our hearts were very sad.

Next day Fred was worse, and we all saw that his words would come true,—he was dying. I never saw a man so cast down in all my life as our captain was when he came to see that all hope was over. He was completely broken down. He walked about the deck, muttering to himself as if he were deranged, and I overheard him once or twice in the cabin groaning, and saying to him-

self, that he "had been the death of that lad, body and soul."

I was permitted to nurse my poor messmate, and I spent much of my time in reading the Bible to him, at his own request. Many and many a time did the captain come down to see him and to implore his forgiveness; but although Fred said that he did forgive him, he would not utter another word. The captain thought this must be owing to weakness, but I felt sure there must be some other reason.

One day (for he lived about a week after the accident)—one day I said to him, "Fred, why don't you speak to the captain when he comes to see you? I'm sure it would do him good, and he needs comfort, poor man, for he's desperately down about you, and blames himself more than you think."

"I know it, Bob," said he, in a faint low voice, "but I can't speak to him somehow. I want to speak to him about his soul, but I don't know how to begin, and before I can make up my mind he's away."

Just as he said this the captain came below, and, going to the cot where Fred lay, took his hand in his, and said tenderly—

"How do you feel now, my dear boy. Are you suffering much pain?"

"Not much," replied Fred; then he stopped, and looked anxiously in the captain's face.

"What would you say, my boy? You want to speak to me, I think."

Fred smiled languidly, and said with difficulty, "I'll soon be away captain—"

He could not go on, but he pointed upwards with his finger.

"Ah! you would tell me that the Lord gives you comfort. Is that what you would say?"

"He does," cried Fred with energy, raising himself a little, and seizing the captain by the wrist.

At that moment a sudden paleness overspread his face, and he sank on the pillow with a deep sigh. I thought the end had come, but he turned to me and said in a low voice: "Find the sixteenth chapter of the Acts, thirty-first verse; also find Exodus, twentieth chapter, eighth verse. Read both—read *both*."

I turned to the chapters he mentioned, and read as follows, while Fred gazed earnestly into the captain's face, holding his wrist firmly with one hand, and with a finger of the other pointing to the Bible. The two verses ran thus:—

"'And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.'

"'Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.'

"Will you 'believe,' will you 'remember,' captain?" said the dying man more earnestly.

"I will, I will," replied the other, while big

tears rolled over his rugged cheeks, and fell upon the hand that grasped his wrist so firmly.

Fred smiled faintly, but he did not speak again. He seemed to have received just strength to make this one effort to save a human soul, and then he died. We buried our shipmate in the usual sailor fashion. We wrapped him in his hammock, with a cannon-ball at his feet to sink him. The captain read the burial-service at the gangway, and then, in deep silence, we committed his corpse to the deep.

CHAPTER IX.

KEEPING THE SABBATH.

THE death of poor Fred Borders cast a gloom over the ship for many days. Every one had respected, and many of us had loved the lad, so that we mourned for him long and truly. But a sailor's life is such a rough one, requiring so much energy and hearty good-will to his work, that he cannot afford to allow the sorrows of his heart to sit long on his countenance. In a day or two after no one would have supposed we had lost one of our best men. Whales appeared in great numbers around us. The old cry of "There she blows!" rang out frequently from the mast-head, and the answering cry from the captain, "Where away?" was followed by the "Stand by to lower!—lower away." Then came the chase, with all its dangers and excitement—the driving of the harpoon, the sudden rush of the struck fish, the smoke and sparks of fire from the logger-head, the plunging of the lance, the spouting

blood, the "flurry" at the end, and the wild cheer as we beheld our prize floating calmly on the sea. And in the midst of such work we forgot for a time the solemn scene we had so recently witnessed. But our hearts were not so light as before, and although we did not show it, I knew full well that many a joke was checked, and many a laugh repressed, for the memory of our dead shipmate.

But the man who was most affected by his death was the captain. This was natural, and did not surprise us; but we were not prepared for the great change that soon appeared in his manner and conduct. After a time he laughed with the rest of us at a good joke, and cheered as loud as the best when a big fish turned belly up, but his behaviour to us became more gentle and kind, and he entirely gave up the habit of swearing. He also forbade working on Sunday. Many a whale have I seen sporting and spouting near us on that day, but never again after our shipmate's death did we lower a boat or touch a harpoon on Sunday. Some of the grumblers used to swear at this, and complain of it to each other, but they never spoke so as to let the captain hear, and they soon gave up their grumbling, for the most of us were well pleased with the change, and all of us had agreed to it.

The first Sunday after Fred's death, the cap-

tain assembled the crew on the quarter-deck, and spoke to us about it.

"My lads," said he, "I've called you aft to make a proposal that may perhaps surprise some of you. Up to this time, you know very well, there has been little difference aboard this ship between Saturday and Sunday. Since our poor shipmate died I have been thinkin' much on this matter, and I've come to the conclusion that we shall rest from all work on the Lord's-day, except such as must be done to work the ship. Now, lads, you know me well enough by this time. I have never been a religious man all my life, and I don't pretend to say that I'm one now. I'm not very learned on this matter, and can't explain myself very well; but this I know, that in time past I have neglected and despised my Maker, and in time to come I mean to try to respect him and obey his commandments. When poor Fred was dying, he asked me to promise that I would 'believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.' I did promise, and, with the blessing of God, I mean to try. Now, what think you, lads, shall we give the whales a rest on Sundays?"

We all agreed to this at once, for the effect of the captain's speech was great upon us. It was not so much what he said, as the way in which he said it. He was by nature a bold, determined

man, who never flinched from danger or duty, and when we heard him talking in that way we could scarcely believe our ears.

This was all that was said about the matter between us and the captain, but we had many a hot discussion in the forecastle amongst ourselves after that. Some were in favour of the new move, and said, stoutly, that the captain was a sensible fellow. Others said he was becoming an old wife, and that no luck would follow the ship if the captain became a parson or a Methodist. In the course of time, however, we found the benefit of the change in every way; and the grumblers were silenced, because, in spite of their wise shakings of the head, we filled the ship with oil as full as she could hold, much sooner than we had expected.

And now that I am on this subject, I would like to say a few words, to show that I am not merely inventing a tale to drag in a discussion on the keeping of the Sabbath day. To manly and straightforward minds it is a pleasure to inquire into truth, whenever it presents itself in a natural way. The keeping of Sunday while engaged in the whale-fishery *is a difficulty*. Men have found it so, and have said that the thing is impossible. Other men have found it difficult, but have said—and have *proved*—that the thing is possible. This is not the place to discuss the

great questions,—"Is the Sabbath binding on men?" and "How should it be kept?" I leave that to abler hands. The best men in the land have said "Yes" to the first question. That is sufficient to state here. But this *is* the place to tell of what *whalemen* have said on this great question.

There is nothing like experience. Let us consider what has been said by one of the greatest whaling captains that ever lived, in regard to his experience. It was many years after this first whaling cruise that I came to hear of this good man.

Captain Scoresby, who died at a ripe old age a few years ago, went to the Greenland whale-fishery when quite a boy, in his father's ship. He continued in that fishery for many years, and was very successful. His schooling when young was thus somewhat interrupted, but he was one of those strong-minded, sturdy-hearted men, who will educate themselves in spite of all difficulties. He seized every opportunity of acquiring knowledge, and at last became one of the great and learned men of his day. From early boyhood he was seriously minded, and he afterwards became a decided Christian. He had always felt a strong regard for the Sabbath day, and, after obtaining command of a ship in the whale-fishery, he resolved to keep that day holy.

The following are nearly his own words on this

subject, and they are well worthy of the attention of all thinking men, for the man who uttered them was a hard-working practical seaman, who knew his business well, and did his work thoroughly.

Captain Scoresby says :—" Though for several of the latter voyages which I undertook to the northern seas, it had been our rule to cease as much as possible from fishing on the Sabbath, it was not until the year 1820 that I was enabled *regularly* to carry the principle into effect. But in that year we did not once attempt the fishing on the sacred day. Several of the harpooneers were much displeased with this rule at the beginning of the voyage, for they had such a stake in the success of the fishery that the capture of a single large whale would yield them each six or eight pounds. They thought it a great hardship that, whilst other ships took advantage of the seven days of the week, we should be reduced to six. The chief officer, at the outset, was very much annoyed at having to waste one day every week in idleness, and he was heard to say that if we, under such disadvantages, should make a successful voyage, he would then believe there was indeed something like a blessing on the keeping of the Sabbath.

" The early and middle part of the voyage turned out very unsuccessful. Towards the close

of the season our principles were severely tested, for on these Sundays, one after the other, a number of fine whales appeared most invitingly around us. But in spite of this temptation to 'hungry fishermen,' we were enabled to stick to our principles, and the success which followed was, I believe, looked on by all on board as a special blessing from God. On the following Wednesday, a fine fish was struck, and soon secured. The next Lord's-day was one of sanctified and happy repose, though fish were astir near us. Early in the week we were again fortunate. Strengthened in body and spirits by rest, and blessed, I firmly believe, by Him who has promised His blessing to those who '*call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable*,' we killed several whales under great difficulties. Two were taken on the Tuesday, and another on Friday—the value of the three being about £1600.

"A day of sweet and welcome repose was the succeeding Sabbath. A genial and cloudless atmosphere cheered the spirits, whilst all nature, sparkling under the sun's bright beams, seemed to participate in the gladness. Several whales sported around us; but, as far as we were concerned, they were allowed a Sabbath-day's privilege to sport undisturbed. The men were now accustomed to look for a blessing on the keeping of the Sabbath."

I have given Mr. Scoresby's opinion on this point at some length, because, coming from such a man, it ought to have much weight. But, after all, what does it come to? It only proves the old truth, that God's ways are better than man's ways, and that man finds his greatest success and his highest happiness in keeping the commandments of his wise and good Creator.

Having made this slight but earnest attempt to commend this subject to the attention of my readers, I turn again to our voyage, which was now drawing rapidly to a close.

CHAPTER X.

NEWS FROM HOME—A GAM.

SHOREGOING people have but little notion of the ease with which the heart of a jack-tar is made to rejoice when he is out on a long voyage. His pleasures and amusements are so few that he is thankful to make the most of whatever is thrown in his way. In the whale-fisheries, no doubt, he has more than enough of excitement, but after a time he gets used to this, and begins to long for a little variety—and of all the pleasures that fall to his lot, that which delights him most is to have a GAM with another ship.

Now, a gam is the meeting of two or more whale-ships, their keeping company for a time, and the exchanging of visits by the crews. It is neither more nor less than a jollification on the sea,—the inviting of your friends to feast and make merry in your floating house. There is this difference, however, between a gam at sea and a party on land, that your *friends* on the ocean are men whom you perhaps never saw before, and whom you will likely never meet again. There

is also another difference—there are no ladies at a gam. This is a great want, for man is but a rugged creature when away from the refining influence of woman; but, in the circumstances, of course, it can't be helped.

We had a gam one day, on this voyage, with a Yankee whale-ship, and a first-rate gam it was, for, as the Yankee had gammed three days before with another English ship, we got a lot of news second-hand; and, as we had not seen a new face for many months, we felt towards those Yankees like brothers, and swallowed all they had to tell us like men starving for news.

It was on a fine calm morning, just after breakfast, that we fell in with this ship. We had seen no whales for a day or two, but we did not mind that, for our hold was almost full of oil-barrels. Tom Lokins and I were leaning over the starboard bulwarks, watching the small fish that every now and then darted through the clear-blue water like arrows, and smoking our pipes in silence. Tom looked uncommonly grave, and I knew that he was having some deep and knowing thoughts of his own which would leak out in time. All at once he took his pipe from his mouth and stared earnestly at the horizon.

"Bob," said he, speaking very slowly, "if there aint a ship right off the starboard beam, I'm a Dutchman."

"You don't mean it!" said I, starting with a feeling of excitement.

Before another word could be uttered, the cry of "Sail ho!" came ringing down from the mast-head. Instantly the quiet of the morning was broken; sleepers sprang up and rubbed their eyes, the men below rushed wildly up the hatchway, the cook came tearing out of his own private den, flourishing a soup-ladle in one hand and his tormentors in the other, the steward came tumbling up with a lump of dough in his fist that he had forgot to throw down in his haste, and the captain bolted up from the cabin without his hat.

"Where away?" cried he, with more than his usual energy.

"Right off the starboard beam, sir."

"Square the yards! Look alive, my hearties," was the next order; for although the calm sea was like a sheet of glass, a light air, just sufficient to fill our top-gallant sails, enabled us to creep through the water.

"Hurrah!" shouted the men as we sprang to obey.

"What does she look like?" roared the captain.

"A big ship, sir, I think," replied the look-out; "but I can only just make out the top of her main t-gallan' s'l."—(Sailors scorn to speak of *top-gallant sails*.)

Gradually, one by one, the white sails of the stranger rose up like cloudlets out of the sea, and our hearts beat high with hope and expectation as we beheld the towering canvas of a full-rigged ship rise slowly into view.

"Show our colours," said the captain.

In a moment the Union Jack of Old England was waving at the mast-head in the gentle breeze, and we watched anxiously for a reply. The stranger was polite; his colours flew up a moment after and displayed the Stripes and Stars of America.

"A Yankee!" exclaimed some of the men in a tone of slight disappointment.

I may remark, that our disappointment arose simply from the fact that there was no chance, as we supposed, of getting news from "home" out of a ship that must have sailed last from America. For the rest, we cared not whether they were Yankees or Britons—they were men who could speak the English tongue, that was enough for us.

"Never mind, boys," cried one, "we'll have a jolly gam; that's a fact."

"So we will," said another, "and I'll get news of my mad Irish cousin, Terrence O'Flannagan, who went out to seek his fortin in Ameriky with two shillin's and a broken knife in his pocket, and its been said he's got into a government situation

o' some sort connected with the jails,—whether as captain or leftenant o' police, or turnkey, I'm not rightly sure."

"More likely as a life-tenant of one of the cells," observed Bill Blunt, laughing.

"Don't speak ill of a better man than yerself behind his back," retorted the owner of the Irish cousin.

"Stand by to lower the jolly-boat," cried the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Lower away!"

In a few minutes we were leaping over the calm sea in the direction of the strange ship, for the breeze had died down, and we were too eager to meet with new faces, and to hear the sound of new voices, to wait for the wind.

To our joy we found that the Yankee had had a gam (as I have already said) with an English ship a few days before, so we returned to our vessel loaded with old newspapers from England, having invited the captain and crew of the Yankee to come aboard of us and spend the day.

While preparation was being made for the reception of our friends, we got hold of two of the old newspapers, and Tom Lokins seized one, while Bill Blunt got the other, and both men sat down on the windlass to retail the news to a crowd of eager men who tried hard to listen to

both at once, and so could make nothing out of either.

"Hold hard, Tom Lokins," cried one. "What's that you say about the Emperor, Bill?"

"The Emperor of Roosia," said Bill Blunt, reading slowly, and with difficulty, "is—stop a bit, messmates, wot *can* this word be?—the Emperor of Roosia is—"

"Blowed up with gunpowder, and shattered to a thousand pieces," said Tom Lokins, raising his voice with excitement, as he read from *his* paper an account of the blowing up of a mountain fortress in India.

"Oh! come, I say, one at a time, if you please;" cried a harpooneer, "a feller can't git a word of sense out of sich a jumble."

"Come, messmates," cried two or three voices, as Tom stopped suddenly, and looked hard at the paper, "go ahead! wot have ye got there that makes ye look as wise as an owl? Has war been and broke out with the French?"

"I do believe he's readin' the births, marriages, and deaths," said one of the men, peeping over Tom's shoulder.

"Read 'em out, then, can't ye?" cried another.

"I say, Bill Blunt, I think this consarns *you*," cried Tom; "isn't your sweatheart's name Susan Croft?"

"That's a fact," said Bill, looking up from his paper, "and who has got a word to say agin the prettiest lass in all Liverpool?"

"Nobody's got a word to say against her," replied Tom; "but she's married, that's all."

Bill Blunt leaped up as if he had been shot, and the blood rushed to his face, as he seized the paper, and tried to find the place.

"Where is it, Tom? let me see it with my own two eyes. Oh, here it is!"

The poor man's face grew paler and paler as he read the following words:—

"Married at Liverpool, on the 5th inst., by the Rev. Charles Manson, Edward Gordon, Esq., to Susan, youngest daughter of Admiral Croft—"

A perfect roar of laughter drowned the remainder of the sentence.

"Well done, Bill Blunt—Mister Blunt, we'll have to call him hereafter," said Tom, with a grim smile; "I had no notion you thought so much o' yourself as to aim at an admiral's daughter."

"All right, my hearties, chaff away!" said Bill, fetching a deep sigh of relief, while a broad grin played on his weather-beaten visage. "There's *two* Susan Crofts, that's all; but I wouldn't give *my* Susan for all the admiral's daughters that ever walked in shoe-leather."

"Hallo! here come the Yankees," cried the captain, coming on deck at that moment.

Our newspapers were thrown down at once, and we prepared to receive our guests, who, we could see, had just put off from their ship in two boats. But before they had come within a mile of us, their attention, as well as ours, was riveted on a most extraordinary sight.

Not more than a hundred yards ahead of our ship, a whale came suddenly to the surface of the water, seeming, by its wild motions, to be in a state of terror. It continued for some time to struggle, and lash the whole sea around it into a white foam.

At once the boats were lowered from both ships, and we went after this fish, but his motions were so violent, that we found it utterly impossible to get near enough to throw a harpoon. When we had approached somewhat closely, we discovered that it had been attacked by a killer fish, which was fully twenty feet long, and stuck to it like a leech. The monster's struggles were made in trying to shake itself free of this tremendous enemy, but it could not accomplish this. The killer held him by the under jaw, and hung on there, while the whale threw himself out of the water in his agony, with his great mouth open, like a huge cavern, and the blood flowing so fast from the wound that the sea was dyed for a long distance round. This killer fought like a bulldog. It held on until the whale was exhausted,

out they passed away from us in such a confused struggle, that a harpoon could not be fixed for an hour after we first saw them. On this being done, the killer let go, and the whale, being already half dead, was soon killed.

The Yankee boats were the first to come up with this fish, so the prize belonged to them. We were well pleased at this, as we could afford to let them have it, seeing that we could scarcely have found room to stow away the oil in our hold. It was the Yankee's first fish, too, so they were in great spirits about it, and towed it to their ship, singing "Yankee-doodle" with all their might.

As they passed our boat, the captain hailed them.

"I wish you joy of your first fish, sir," said he to the Yankee captain.

"Thank you, stranger. I guess we're in luck, though it aint a big one. I say, what sort o' brute was that that had hold of him? Never seed sich a crittur in all my life."

"He's a killer," said our captain.

"A killer! Guess he just is, and no mistake, if we hadn't helped him, he'd have done the job for himself! What does he kill him for?"

"To eat him, but I'm told he only eats the tongue. You'll not forget that you've promised to gam with us to-night," cried our captain, as they were about to commence pulling again.

"All right, stranger, one half will come to-night, before sundown; t'other half to-morrow, if the calm holds. Good-day. Give way, lads."

The men dipped their oars, and resumed their song, while we pulled back to our ship. We did not offer to help them, because the fish was a small one, and the distance they had to go not great.

It was near sunset when, according to promise, the Yankees came on board, and spent a long evening with us. They were a free, open-hearted, boastful, conceited, good-humoured set of fellows, and a jolly night we had of it in the forecastle, while the mates and captains were enjoying themselves and spinning their yarns in the cabin.

Of course, we began with demands for home-news, and, when we had pumped out of them every drop they had, we began to songs and spinning yarns. And it was now that my friend Tom Lokins came out strong, and went on at such a rate, that he quite won the hearts of our guests. Tom was not noisy, and he was slow in his talk, but he had the knack of telling a good story; he never used a wrong word, or a word too many, and, having a great deal of humour, men could not help listening when he began to talk.

After this we had a dance,-and here I became useful, being able to play Scotch reels and Irish jigs on the fiddle. Then we had songs and yarns

again. Some could tell of furious fights with whales that made our blood boil; others could talk of the green fields at home, until we almost fancied we were boys again; and some could not tell stories at all. They had little to say, and that little they said ill; and I noticed that many of those who were perfect bores would cry loudest to be heard, though none of us wanted to hear them. We used to quench such fellows by calling loudly for a song with a rousing chorus.

It was not till the night was far spent, and the silver moon was sailing through the starry sky, that the Yankees left us, and rowed away with a parting cheer.

CHAPTER XI.

RETURN HOME.

SIX months after our "gam" with the Yankees Tom Lokins and I found ourselves seated once more in the little garret beside my dear old mother.

"Deary me, Robert, how changed ye are!"

"Changed, mother! I should think so! If you'd gone through all that I've done and seen since we last sat together in this room you'd be changed too."

"And have ye really seen the whales, my boy?" continued my mother, stroking my face with her old hand.

"Seen them? ay, and killed them too—many of them."

"You've been in danger, my son," said my mother earnestly, "but the Lord has preserved you safe through it all."

"Ay, mother, He has preserved my life in the midst of many dangers," said I, "for which I am most thankful; but He has done more than that.

He has preserved my soul in the midst of dangers of a far worse kind than one's body falls in with while fighting the whales. I'll tell ye of that some other time when we are alone."

There was a short silence after this, during which my mother and I gazed earnestly at each other, and Tom Lokins smoked his pipe and stared at the fire.

"Robert, how big is a whale?" inquired my mother, suddenly.

"How big? why it's as big as a small ship, only it's longer, and not quite so fat."

"Robert," replied my mother gravely, "ye didn't use to tell untruths; ye must be jokin'."

"Joking, mother, I was never more in earnest in my life. Why, I tell you that I've seen, ay, and helped to cut up, whales that were more than sixty feet long, with heads so big that their mouths could have taken in a boat. Why, mother, I declare to you that you could put this room into a whale's mouth, and you and Tom and I could sit round this table and take our tea upon his tongue quite comfortable. Isn't that true, Tom?"

My mother looked at Tom, who removed his pipe, puffed a cloud of smoke, and nodded his head twice very decidedly.

"Moreover," said I, "a whale is so big and strong, that it can knock a boat right up into the

air, and break in the sides of a ship. One day a whale fell right on top of one of our boats and smashed it all to bits. Now that's a real truth !"

Again my mother looked at Tom Lokins, and again that worthy man puffed an immense cloud of smoke and nodded his head more decidedly than before. Being anxious to put to flight all her doubts at once, he said solemnly, "Old ooman, that's a fact !"

"Robert," said my mother, "tell me something about the whales."

Just as she said this the door opened, and in came the good old gentleman with the nose like his cane-knob, and with as kind a heart as ever beat in a human breast. My mother had already told me that he came to see her regularly once a week, ever since I went to sea, except in summer, when he was away in the country, and that he had never allowed her to want for anything. My mother one day said to him, "I wonder, sir, why ye take so much thought for a poor old body like me ;" to which he replied, "God tells me, 'Blessed are they that consider the poor.' As I want God's blessing, this is one of the means I take to get it ; so, you see," said he with a smile, "I'm a selfish old fellow, for I'm thinking of myself as well as you."

I need scarcely say that there was a hearty

meeting between us three, and that we had much to say to each other. But in the midst of it all my mother turned to the old gentleman and said—

"Robert was just going to tell me something about his adventures with the whales."

"That's capital!" cried the old gentleman, rubbing his hands. "Come, Bob, my boy, let's hear about 'em."

Being thus invited, I consented to spin them a yarn. The old gentleman settled himself in his chair, my mother smoothed her apron, folded her hands, and looked meekly into my face. Tom Lokins filled his pipe, stretched out his foot to poke the fire with the toe of his shoe, and began to smoke like a steam-engine; then I cleared my throat and began my tale, and before I had done talking that night, I had told them all that I have told in this little book to you, good reader, almost word for word.

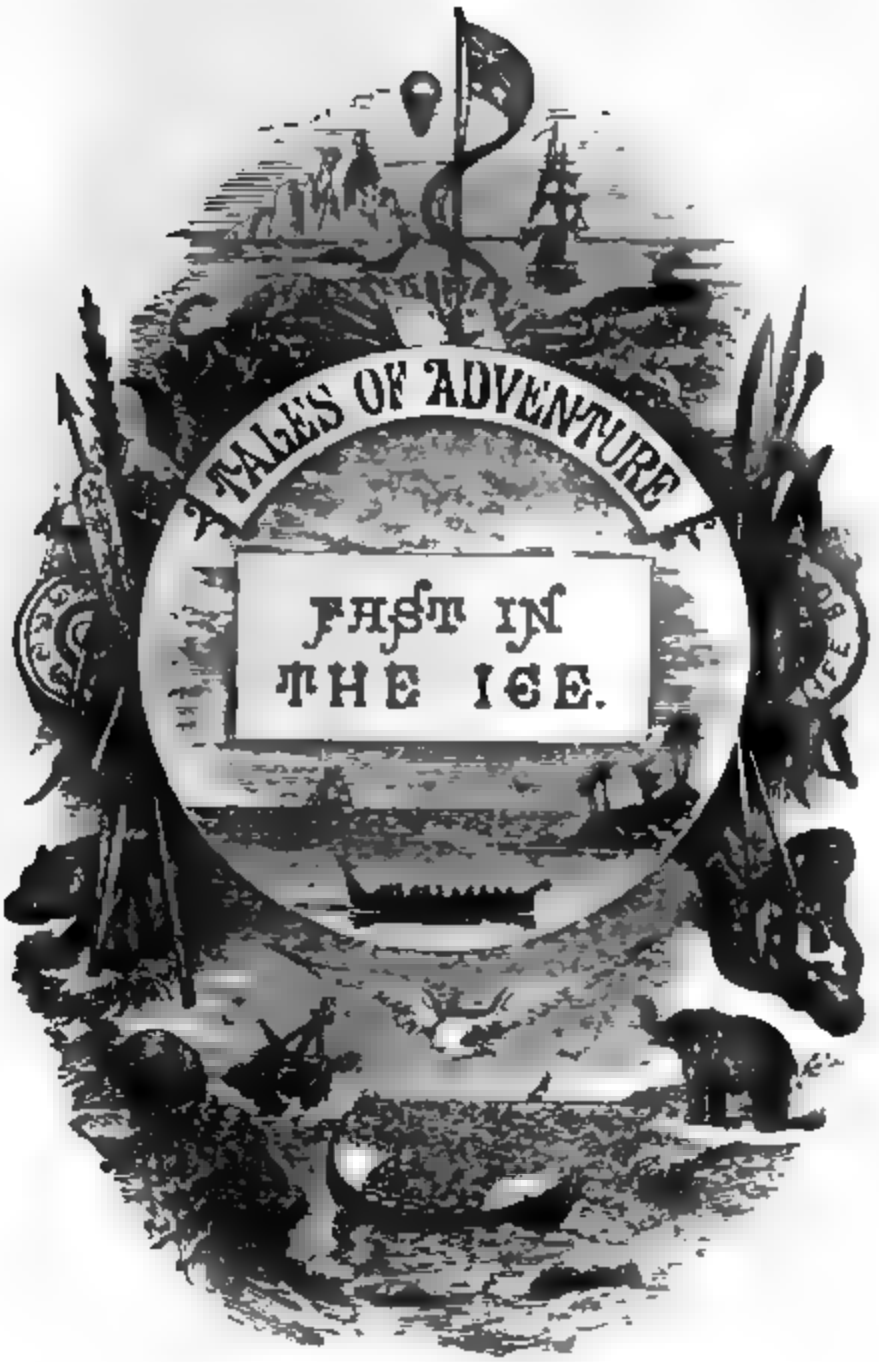
Thus ended my first voyage to the South Seas. Many and many a trip have I made since then, and many a wonderful sight have I seen, both in the south and in the north. But if I were to write an account of all my adventures, my little book would grow into a big one, I must therefore come to a close.

The profits of this voyage were so great, that I was enabled to place my mother in a position of

comfort for the rest of her life, which, alas! was very short. She died about six months after my return. I nursed her to the end, and closed her eyes. The last word she uttered was her Saviour's name. She died, as she had lived, trusting in the Lord; and when I laid her dear head in the grave my heart seemed to die within me, for I felt that I had lost one of God's most precious gifts—an honest, gentle, pious mother.

I'm getting to be an old man now, but, through the blessing of God, I am comfortable and happy. As I have more than enough of this world's goods, and no family to care for, my chief occupation is to look after the poor, and particularly the old women who live in my neighbourhood. After the work of the day is done, I generally go and spend the evening with Tom Lokins, who lives near by, and is stout and hearty still; or he comes and spends it with me, and, while we smoke our pipes together, we often fall to talking about those stirring days when, in the strength and hope of youth, we sailed together to the South Seas, and took to—*fighting the Whales.*

Fighting a Polar Bear.


TALES OF ADVENTURE
FAST IN
THE ICE.

Fighting a Polar Bear.

TALES OF ADVENTURE
FAST IN
THE ICE.

FAST IN THE ICE.

CHAPTER I.

OUTWARD BOUND.

ONE day, many years ago, a brig cast off from her moorings and sailed from a British port for the Polar Seas. That brig never came back.

Many a hearty cheer was given, many a kind wish was uttered, many a handkerchief was waved, and many a tearful eye gazed that day as the vessel left old England, and steered her course into the unknown regions of the far north.

But no cheer ever greeted her return ; no bright eyes ever watched her homeward-bound sails rising on the far off horizon.

Battered by the storms of the Arctic Seas, her sails and cordage stiffened by the frosts, and her hull rasped and shattered by the ice of those regions, she was forced on a shore where the green grass has little chance to grow, where winter reigns nearly all the year round, where man never

sends his merchandise, and never drives his plough. There the brig was frozen in ; there, for two long years, she lay unable to move, and her starving crew forsook her ; there, year after year she lay, unknown, unvisited by civilized man, and unless the wild Eskimos* have torn her to pieces and made spears of her timbers, or the ice has swept her out to sea and whirled her to destruction, there she lies still—hard and fast in the ice.

The vessel was lost but her crew were saved, and most of them returned to tell their kinsfolk of the wonders and the dangers of the frozen regions, where God has created some of the most beautiful and some of the most awful objects that were ever looked on by the eye of man.

What was told by the fireside, long ago, is now recounted in this book.

Imagine a tall strong man, of about five and forty, with short curly black hair, just beginning to turn grey ; stern black eyes that look as if they could pierce into your secret thoughts ; a firm mouth with lines of good-will and kindness lurking about it ; a deeply browned skin, and a short thick beard and moustache. That is a portrait of the commander of the brig. His name was Harvey. He stood on the deck close by the wheel looking wistfully over the stern. As the

* This word is here spelt as pronounced. It is usually spelt Esquimaux.

vessel bent before the breeze and cut swiftly through the water a female hand was raised among the gazers on the pier, and a white scarf waved in the breeze. In the fore-front of the throng, and lower down, another hand was raised; it was a little one, but very vigorous; it whirled a cap round a small head of curly black hair, and a shrill "hurrah!" came floating out to sea.

The captain kissed his hand and waved his hat in reply; then, wheeling suddenly round, he shouted in a voice of thunder—

"Mind your helm there, let her away a point. Take a pull on these fore-topsail halyards; look alive, lads!"

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the men.

There was no occasion whatever for these orders. The captain knew that well enough, but he had his own reasons for giving them. The men knew that too, and they understood his reasons when they observed the increased sternness of his eyes and the compression of his lips.

Inclination and duty! What wars go on in the hearts of men—high and low, rich and poor—between these two. What varied fortune follows man, according as the one or the other carries the day.

"Please, sir," said a gruff, broad-shouldered, and extremely short man, with little or no forehead, a hard vacant face, and a pair of enormous

red whiskers—"Please, sir, Sam Baker's took very bad; I think it would be as well if you could give him a little physic, sir, a tumbler of Epsom, or somethink of that sort."

"Why, Mr. Dicey, there can't be anything very far wrong with Baker," said the captain, looking down at his second mate, "he seems to me one of the healthiest men in the ship. What's the matter with him?"

"Well, I can't say, sir," replied Mr. Dicey, "but he looks 'orrible bad, all yellow and green about the gills, and fearful red round the eyes. But what frightens me most is that I heard him groanin' very heavy about quarter of an hour ago, and then I saw him suddenly fling himself into his 'ammock and begin blubberin' like a child. Now, sir, I say, when a grow'd-up man gives way like that, there must be somethink far wrong with his inside. And it's a serious thing, sir, to take a sick man on such a voyage as this."

"Does he not say what's wrong with him?" asked the captain.

"No, sir, he don't. He says it's nothin' and he'll be all right if he's only let alone. I did hear him once or twice muttering somethink about his wife and child; you know, sir, he's got a young wife, and she had a baby about two months 'fore we came away, but I can't think that's got much to do with it, for *I've* got a wife myself, sir, and

six children, two of 'em bein' babies, and that don't upset *me*, and Baker's a much stronger man."

"You are right, Mr. Dicey, he is a much stronger man than you," replied the captain, "and I doubt not that his strength will enable him to get over this without the aid of physic."

"Very well, sir," said Mr. Dicey.

The second mate was a man whose countenance never showed any signs of emotion, no matter what he felt. He seldom laughed, or, if he did, his mouth remained almost motionless, and the sounds that came out were anything but cheerful. He had light grey eyes which always wore an expression of astonishment; but the expression was accidental, it indicated no feeling. He would have said "Very well, sir," if the captain had refused to give poor Baker food instead of physic.

"And, hark'ee, Mr. Dicey," said the captain, "don't let him be disturbed till he feels inclined to move."

"Very well, sir," replied the second mate, touching his cap as he turned away.

"So," murmured the captain as he gazed earnestly at the now distant shore, "I'm not the only one who carries a heavy heart to sea this day and leaves sorrowing hearts behind him."

CHAPTER II.

AT SEA—THE FIRST STORM

IT is now hundreds of years since the North Polar Regions began to attract general attention. Men have long felt very inquisitive about that part of the earth, and many good ships, many noble lives have been lost in trying to force a passage through the ice that encumbers the Arctic seas summer and winter. Britain has done more than other nations in the cause of discovery within the Arctic circle. The last and greatest of her Arctic heroes perished there—the famous Sir John Franklin.

Were I writing a history of those regions, I would have much to say of other countries as well as of our own. But such is not my object in this book. I mean simply to follow in the wake of one of Britain's adventurous discoverers, and thus give the reader an idea of the fortunes of those gallant men who risk life and limb for the sake of obtaining knowledge of distant lands.

There have always been restless spirits in this country. There have ever been men who, when boys, were full of mischief, and who could "settle to nothing" when they grew up. Lucky for us, lucky for the world, that such is the case! Many of our "restless spirits," as we call them, have turned out to be our heroes, our discoverers, our greatest men. No doubt many of them have become our drones, our sharpers, our blacklegs. But that is just saying that some men are good, while others are bad—no blame is due to *what is called* the restlessness of spirit. Our restless men, if good, find rest in action, in bold energetic toil; if bad, they find rest alas in untimely graves!

Captain Harvey was one of our restless spirits. He had a deeply learned friend who said to him one day that he felt sure "*there was a sea of open water round the North Pole!*" Hundreds of ships had tried to reach that pole without success, because they always found a barrier of thick ice raised against them. This friend said that if a ship could only cut or force its way through the ice to a certain latitude north, open water would be found. Captain Harvey was much interested in this. He could not rest until he had proved it. He had plenty of money, so had his friend. They resolved to buy a vessel and send it to the seas lying within the Arctic circle. Other rich

friends helped them; a brig was bought, it was named the Hope, and, as we have seen in the last chapter, it finally set sail under command of Captain Harvey.

Many days and nights passed, and the Hope kept her course steadily towards the coast of North America. Greenland was the first land they hoped to see. Baffin's Bay was the strait through which they hoped to reach the open polar sea.

The Hope left England as a whaler, with all the boats, lances, harpoons, lines, and other apparatus used in the whale fishery. It was intended that she should do a little business in that way if Captain Harvey thought it advisable, but the discovery of new lands and seas was their chief end and aim.

At first the weather was fine, the wind fair, and the voyage prosperous. But one night there came a deep calm. Not a breath of air moved over the sea, which was as clear and polished as a looking-glass. The captain walked the deck with the surgeon of the ship, a nephew of his own, named Gregory.

Tom Gregory was a youth of about nineteen, who had not passed through the whole course of a doctor's education, but who was a clever fellow, and better able to cut and carve and physic poor suffering humanity than many an older man who wrote M.D. after his name. He was a fine,

handsome, strapping fellow, with a determined manner and a kind heart. He was able to pull an oar with the best man aboard, and could even steer the brig in fine weather, if need be. He was hearty and romantic, and a great favourite with the men. He, too, was a restless spirit. He had grown tired of college life, and had made up his mind to take a year's run into the Polar Regions, by way of improving his knowledge of the "outlandish" parts of the world.

"I don't like the look of the sky to-day, Tom," said the captain, glancing at the horizon and then at the sails.

"Indeed!" said Tom, in surprise. "It seems to me the most beautiful afternoon we have had since the voyage began. But I suppose you seamen are learned in signs which we landsmen do not understand."

"Perhaps we are," replied the captain; "but it does not require much knowledge of the weather to say that such a dead calm as this, and such unusual heat, is not likely to end in a gentle breeze."

"You don't object to a stiff breeze, uncle?" said the youth.

"No, Tom; but I don't like a storm, because it does us no good, and may do us harm."

"Storms do you no good, uncle!" cried Tom; "how can you say so? Why, what is it that

makes our sailors such trumps? The British tar would not be able to face danger as he does if there were no storms."

"True, Tom, but the British tar would not require to face danger at all if there were no storms. What says the barometer, Mr. Mansell?" said the captain, looking down the skylight into the cabin, where the first mate—a middle-sized man, of thirty-five, or thereabouts—was seated at the table writing up the ship's log-book.

"The glass has gone down an inch, sir, and is still falling," answered the mate.

"Reef the topsail, Mr. Dicey," cried the captain, on hearing this.

"Why such haste?" inquired Gregory.

"Because such a sudden fall in the barometer is a sure sign of approaching bad weather," answered the captain.

The first man on the shrouds, and out upon the main-topsail yard, was Sam Baker, whose active movements and hearty manner showed that he had quite recovered his health without the use of physic. He was quickly followed by some of his shipmates, all of whom were picked men—able in body and ready for anything.

In a few minutes sail was reduced. Soon after that, clouds began to rise on the horizon and spread over the sky. Before half an hour had passed, the breeze came—came far stronger

than had been expected—and the order to take in sail had to be repeated.

Baker was first again. He was closely followed by Joe Davis and Jim Croft, both of them sturdy fellows—good specimens of the British seaman. Davy Butts, who came next, was not so good a specimen. He was nearly six feet high, very thin and loosely put together, like a piece of bad furniture. But his bones were big, and he was stronger than he looked. He would not have formed one of such a crew had he not been a good man. The rest of the crew, of whom there were eighteen, not including the officers, were of all shapes, sizes, and complexions.

The sails had scarcely been taken in when the storm burst on the brig in all its fury. The waves rose like mountains and followed after her, as if they were eager to swallow her up. The sky grew dark overhead as the night closed in, the wind shrieked through the rigging, and the rag of canvas that they ventured to hoist seemed about to burst away from the yard. It was an awful night. Such a night as causes even reckless men to feel how helpless they are—how dependent on the arm of God. The gale steadily increased until near midnight, when it blew a perfect hurricane.

"It's a dirty night," observed the captain to the second mate, as the latter came on deck to relieve the watch.

"It is, sir," replied Mr. Dicey, as coolly as if he were about to sit down to a good dinner on shore. Mr. Dicey was a remarkably matter-of-fact man. He looked upon a storm as he looked upon a fit of the toothache—a thing that had to be endured, and was not worth making a fuss about.

"It won't last long," said the captain.

"No, sir, it won't," answered Mr. Dicey.

As Mr. Dicey did not seem inclined to say more, the captain went below, and flung himself on a locker, having given orders that he should be called if any change for the worse took place in the weather. Soon afterwards a tremendous sea rose high over the stern, and part of it fell on the deck with a terrible crash, washing Mr. Dicey into the lee-scuppers, and almost sweeping him overboard. On regaining his feet, and his position beside the wheel, the second mate shook himself, and considered whether he ought to call the captain. Having meditated some time, he concluded that the weather was no worse, although it had treated him very roughly, so he did not disturb the captain's repose.

Thus the storm raged all that night. It tossed the Hope about like a cork; it well-nigh blew the sails off the masts, and almost blew Mr. Dicey's head off his shoulders; then it stopped as it had begun—suddenly.

CHAPTER III.

IN THE ICE—DANGERS OF ARCTIC VOYAGING.

NEXT morning the Hope was becalmed in the midst of a scene more beautiful than the tongue or the pen of man can describe.

When the sun rose that day, it shone upon what appeared to be a field of glass and a city of crystal. Every trace of the recent storm was gone except a long swell, which caused the brig to roll considerably, but which did not break the surface of the sea.

Ice was to be seen all round as far as the eye could reach. Ice in every form and size imaginable. And the wonderful thing about it was that many of the masses resembled the buildings of a city. There were houses, and churches, and monuments, and spires, and ruins. There were also islands and mountains! Some of the pieces were low and flat, no bigger than a boat; others were tall, with jagged tops; some of the fields, as they are called, were a mile and more in extent, and there were a number of bergs, or ice-moun-

tains, higher than the brig's topmasts. These last were almost white, but they had, in many places, a greenish-blue colour that was soft and beautiful. The whole scene shone and sparkled so brilliantly in the morning sun, that one could almost fancy it was one of the regions of fairy-land!

When young Gregory came on the quarter-deck, no one was there except Jim Croft, a short, thick-set man, with the legs of a dwarf and the shoulders of a giant. He stood at the helm, and although no steering was required as there was no wind, he kept his hands on the spokes of the wheel, and glanced occasionally at the compass. The first mate, who had the watch on deck, was up at the masthead observing the state of the ice.

"How glorious!" exclaimed the youth, as he swept his sparkling eye round the horizon. "Ah! Croft, is not this splendid?"

"So it is, sir," said the seaman, turning the large quid of tobacco that bulged out his left cheek. "It's very beautiful, no doubt, but it's comin' rather thick for my taste."

"How so?" inquired Gregory. "There seems to me plenty of open water to enable us to steer clear of these masses. Besides, as we have no wind it matters little, I should think, whether we have room to sail or not."

"You've not seed much o' the ice yet, that's plain," said Croft, "else you'd know that the floes are closin' round us, an' we'll soon be fast in the pack, if a breeze don't spring up to help us."

As the reader may not, perhaps, understand the terms used by Arctic voyagers in regard to the ice in its various forms, it may be as well here to explain the meaning of those most commonly used.

When ice is seen floating in small detached pieces and scattered masses, it is called "floe" ice, and men speak of getting among the floes. When these floes close up, so that the whole sea seems to be covered with them, and little water can be seen, it is called "pack" ice. When the pack is squeezed together, so that lumps of it are forced up in the form of rugged mounds, these mounds are called "hummocks." A large mass of flat ice, varying from one mile to many miles in extent, is called a "field," and a mountain of ice is called a "berg."

All the ice here spoken of, except the berg, is sea-ice; formed by the freezing of the ocean in winter. The berg is formed in a very different manner. Of this more shall be said in a future chapter.

"Well, my lad," said Gregory, in reply to Jim Croft's last observation, "I have not seen much of the ice yet, as you truly remark, so I hope that the wind will not come to help us out of it

for some time. You don't think it dangerous to get into the pack, do you?"

"Well, not exactly dangerous, sir," replied Croft, "but I must say that it aint safe, 'specially when there's a swell on like this. But that'll go down soon. D'ye know what a nip is, Doctor Gregory?"

"I think I do, at least I have read of such a thing. But I should be very glad to hear what you have to say about it. No doubt you have felt one."

"Felt one!" cried Jim, screwing up his face, and drawing his limbs together, as if he were suffering horrible pain, "no, I've never felt one. The man what *feels* a nip aint likely to live to tell what his feelin's was, but I've *seed* one."

"You've seen one, have you? That must have been interesting. Where was it?"

"Not very far from the Greenland coast," said Croft, giving his quid another turn. "This was the way of it. You must know that there was two ships of us in company at the time. Whalers we was. We got into the heart of the pack somehow, and we thought we'd never get out of it again. There was nothin' but ice all round us as far as the eye could see. The name of our ship was the 'Nancy.' Our comrade was the 'Bullfinch.' One mornin' early we heard a loud noise

of ice rubbin' agin the sides o' the ship, so we all jumped up, an' on deck as fast as we could, for there's short time given to save ourselves in them seas sometimes. The whole pack, we found, was in motion, and a wide lead of water opened up before us, for all the world like a smooth river or canal windin' through the pack. Into this we warped the ship, and, hoistin' sail, steered away cheerily. We passed close to the 'Bullfinch,' which was still hard and fast in the pack, and we saw that her crew were sawin' and cuttin' away at the ice, tryin' to get into the lead that we'd got into. So we hailed them, and said we would wait for 'em outside the pack, if we got through. But the words were no sooner spoken, when the wind it died away, and we were becalmed about half a mile from the 'Bullfinch.'

"'You'd better go down to breakfast, boys,' says our captain, says he, 'the breeze won't be long o' comin' again.'

"So down the men went, and soon after that the steward comes on deck, and, says he to the captain, 'breakfast, sir.' 'Very good,' says the captain, and down he went too, leavin' me at the wheel, and the mate in charge of the deck. He'd not been gone three minutes, when I noticed that the great field of ice on our right was closin' in on the field on our left, and the channel we was floatin' in was closin' up. The mate

noticed it too, but he wouldn't call the captain, 'cause the ice came so slowly and quietly on that for a few minutes we could hardly believe it was movin', and everything round us looked so calm and peaceful like that it was difficult to believe our danger was so great. But this was only a momentary feelin', d'ye see. A minute after that the mate he cries down to the captain—

"'Ice closin' up, sir!'

"And the captain he runs on deck. By this time there was no mistake about it; the ice was close upon us. It was clear that we were to have a nip. So the captain roars down the hatchway, 'Tumble up there! tumble up! every man alive! for your lives!' And sure enough they did tumble up, as I never seed 'em do it before—two or three of 'em was sick; they came up with their clothes in their hands. The ice was now almost touchin' our sides, and I tell *you*, sir, I never did feel so queerish in all my life before as when I looked over the side at the edge of that great field of ice which rose three foot out o' the water, and was I suppose six foot more below the surface. It came on so slow that we could hardly see the motion. Inch by inch the water narrowed between it and our sides. At last it touched on the left side and that shoved us quicker on to the field on our right. Every eye was fixed on it—every man held his breath. You might have heard a pin fall on the

deck. It touched gently at first, then there was a low grindin' and crunchin' sound. The ship trembled as if it had been a livin' creetur, and the beams began to crack. Now, you must know, sir, that when a nip o' this sort takes a ship the ice usually eases off, after givin' her a good squeeze, or when the pressure is too much for her, the ice slips under her bottom and lifts her right out o' the water. But our Nancy was what we call wall-sided. She was never fit to sail in them seas. The consequence was that the ice crushed her sides in. The moment the captain heard the beams begin to go, he knew it was all up with the ship, so he roared to take to the ice for our lives! You may be sure we took his advice. Over the side we went every man Jack of us, and got on the ice. We did not take time to save an article belongin' to us; and it was as well we did not, for the ice closed up with a crash, and we heard the beams and timbers rending like a fire of musketry in the hold. Her bottom must have been cut clean away, for she stood on the ice just as she had floated on the sea. Then the noise stopped, the ice eased off, and the ship began to settle. The lead of water opened up again; in ten minutes after that the 'Nancy' went to the bottom and left us standin' there on the ice.

"It was the mercy of God that let it happen so near the 'Bullfinch.' We might have been out

o' sight o' that ship at the time, and then every man of us would have bin lost. As it was, we had a hard scramble over a good deal of loose ice, jumpin' from lump to lump, and some of us fallin' into the water several times, before we got aboard. Now that was a bad nip, sir, warn't it?"

"It certainly was," replied Gregory; "and although I delight in being amongst the ice, I sincerely hope that our tight little brig may not be tried in the same way. But she is better able to stand it, I should think."

"That she is, sir," replied Croft with much confidence, "I seed her in dock, sir, when they was a-puttin' of extra timbers on the bow, and I do believe she would stand twice as much bad usage as the 'Nancy' got, though she is only half the size."

Jim Croft's opinion on this point was well founded, for the Hope had indeed been strengthened and prepared for her ice battles with the greatest care, by men of experience and ability. As some readers may be interested in this subject, I shall give a brief account of the additions that were made to her hull.

The vessel was nearly 200 tons burden. She had originally been built very strongly, and might even have ventured on a voyage to the Polar seas just as she was. But Captain Harvey resolved to take every precaution to insure the success of his

voyage, and the safety and comfort of his men. He therefore had the whole of the ship's bottom sheathed with thick hardwood planking, which was carried up above her water-line, as high as the ordinary floe-ice would be likely to reach. The hull inside was strengthened with stout cross-beams, as well as with beams running along the length of the vessel, and in every part that was likely to be subjected to pressure iron stanchions were fastened. But the bow of the vessel was the point where the utmost strength was aimed at. Inside, just behind the cutwater, the whole space was so traversed by cross-beams of oak that it almost became a solid mass, and outside the sharp stem was cased in iron so as to resemble a giant's chisel. The false keel was taken off, and the whole vessel, in short, was rendered as strong, outside and in, as wood and iron and skill could make her. It need scarcely be said that all the other arrangements about her were made with the greatest care and without regard to expense, for although the owners of the brig did not wish to waste their money, they set too high a value on human life to risk it for the sake of saving a few pounds. She was provisioned for a cruise of two years and a half. But this was in case of accidents, for Captain Harvey did not intend to be absent much longer than one year.

But, to return to our story—

Jim Croft's fear that they would be set fast was realized sooner than he expected. The floes began to close in, from no cause that could be seen, for the wind was quite still, and in a short time the loose ice pressed against the Hope on all sides. It seemed to young Gregory as if the story that the seaman had just related was about to be enacted over again ; and, being a stranger to ice, he could not help feeling a little uneasy for some time. But there was in reality little or no danger, for the pressure was light, and the brig had got into a small bay in the edge of an ice-field which lay in the midst of the smaller masses.

Seeing that there was little prospect of the pack opening up just then, the captain ordered the ice-anchors to be got out and fixed.

The appearance of the sea from the brig's deck was now extremely wintry, but very bright and cheerful. Not a spot of blue water was to be seen in any direction. The whole ocean appeared as if it had been frozen over.

It was now past noon, and the sun's rays were warm, although the quantity of ice around rendered the air cold. As the men were returning from fixing the anchors, the captain looked over the side and said :—

"It's not likely that we shall move out of this for some hours. What say you, lads, to a game at football ?"

The proposal was received with a loud cheer. The ball had been prepared by the sail-maker, in expectation of some such opportunity as this. It was at once tossed over the side ; those men who were not already on the field scrambled out of the brig, and the entire crew went leaping and yelling over the ice with the wild delight of school boys let loose for an unexpected holiday.

They were in the middle of the game when a loud shout came from the brig, and the captain's voice was heard singing out—

"All hands ahoy! come aboard. Look alive!"

Instantly the men turned, and there was a general race towards the brig, which lay nearly quarter of a mile distant from them.

In summer, changes in the motions of the ice take place in the most unexpected manner. Currents in the ocean are, no doubt, the chief cause of these ; the action of winds has also something to do with them. One of these changes was now taking place. Almost before the men got on board the ice had separated, and long canals of water were seen opening up here and there. Soon after that a light breeze sprang up, the ice-anchors were taken aboard, the sails trimmed, and soon the Hope was again making her way slowly but steadily to the north.

CHAPTER IV.

DIFFICULTIES, TROUBLES, AND DANGERS.

FOR some hours the brig proceeded onward with a freshening breeze, winding and turning in order to avoid the lumps of ice. Many of the smaller pieces were not worth turning out of the way of, the mere weight of the vessel being sufficient to push them aside.

Up to this time they had succeeded in steering clear of everything without getting a thump; but they got one at last, which astonished those among the crew who had not been in the ice before. The captain, Gregory, and Dicey were seated in the cabin at the time taking tea. Ned Dawkins the steward, an active little man, was bringing in a tea-pot with a second supply of tea. In his left hand he carried a tray of biscuit. The captain sat at the head of the table, Dicey at the foot, and the doctor at the side.

Suddenly a tremendous shock was felt! The captain's cup of tea leaped away from him and flooded the centre of the table. The doctor's cup

was empty; he seized the table with both hands and remained steady; but Dicey's cup happened to be at his lips at the moment, and was quite full. The effect on him was unfortunate. He was thrown violently on his back, and the tea poured over his face and drenched his hair as he lay sprawling on the floor. The steward saved himself by dropping the bread-tray and grasping the handle of the cabin door. So violent was the shock that the ship's bell was set a-ringing.

"Beg pardon, gentlemen," cried the first mate looking down the sky-light. "I forgot to warn you. The ice is getting rather thick round us, and I had to charge a lump of it."

"It's all very well to beg pardon," said the captain, "but that won't mend my crockery!"

"Or dry my head," growled Mr. Dicey, "it's as bad as if I'd been dipt overboard, it is."

Before Mr. Dicey's grumbling remarks were finished all three of them had reached the deck. The wind had freshened considerably, and the brig was rushing in a somewhat alarming manner among the floes. It required the most careful attention to prevent her striking heavily.

"If it goes on like this we shall have to reduce sail," observed the captain. "See, there is a neck of ice ahead that will stop us."

This seemed to be probable, for the lane of water along which they were steering was, just ahead of

them, stopped by a neck of ice that connected two floe-pieces. The water beyond was pretty free from ice, but this neck or mass seemed so thick that it became a question whether they should venture to charge it or shorten sail.

"Stand by the fore and main-topsail braces!" shouted the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Now, Mr. Mansell," said he, with a smile, "we have come to our first real difficulty. What do you advise; shall we back the topsails, or try what our little 'Hope' is made of, and charge the enemy?"

"Charge!" answered the mate.

"Just so," said the captain, hastening to the bow to direct the steersman. "Port your helm."

"Steady."

The brig was now about fifty yards from the neck of ice, tearing through the water like a race-horse. In another moment she was up to it and struck it fair in the middle. The stout little vessel quivered to her keel under the shock, but she did not recoil. She split the mass into fragments, and, bearing down all before her, sailed like a conqueror into the clear water beyond.

"Well done the 'Hope!'" said the captain, as he walked aft, while a cheer burst from the men.

"I think she ought to be called the 'Good Hope' ever after this," said Tom Gregory. "If

she cuts her way through everything as easily as she has cut through that neck of ice, we shall reach the North Pole itself before winter."

"If we reach the North Pole *at all*," observed Mr. Dicey, "I'll climb up to the top of it, and stand on my head, I will!"

The second mate evidently had no expectation of reaching that mysterious pole, which men have so long and so often tried to find, in vain.

"Heavy ice ahead, sir," shouted Mr. Mansell, who was at the mast-head with a telescope.

"Where away?"

"On the weather bow, sir, the pack seems open enough to push through, but the large bergs are numerous."

The Hope was now indeed getting into the heart of those icy regions where ships are in constant danger from the floating masses that come down with the ocean-currents from the far north. In sailing along she was often obliged to run with great violence against lumps so large that they caused her whole frame to tremble, stout though it was. "Shall we smash the lump, or will it stave in our bows?" was a question that frequently ran in the captain's mind. Sometimes ice closed round her and squeezed her sides so that her beams cracked. At other times, when a large field was holding her fast, the smaller pieces would grind and rasp against her as they went

past, until the crew fancied the whole of the outer sheathing of planks had been scraped off. Often she had to press close to ice-bergs of great size, and more than once a lump as large as a good-sized house fell off the ice-cliffs and plunged into the sea close to her side, causing her to rock violently on the waves that were raised by it.

Indeed the bergs are dangerous neighbours, not only from this cause, but also on account of their turning upside down at times, and even falling to pieces, so that Captain Harvey always kept well out of their way when he could; but this was not always possible. The little brig had a narrow escape one day from the falling of a berg.

It was a short time after that day on which they had the game at football. They passed in safety through the floes and bergs that had been seen that evening, and got into open water beyond, where they made good progress before again falling in with ice; but at last they came to a part of Baffin's Bay where a great deal of ice is always found. Here the pack surrounded them, and compelled them to pass close to a berg which was the largest they had fallen in with up to that time. It was jagged in form, and high rather than broad. Great peaks rose up from it like the mountain tops of some wild highland region. It was several hundred yards off the weather-

beam when the brig passed, but it towered so high over the masts that it seemed to be much nearer than it was. There was no apparent motion in this berg, and the waves beat and rolled upon its base just as they do on the shore of an island. In fact it was as like an island as possible, or, rather, like a mountain planted in the sea, only it was white instead of green. There were cracks and rents and caverns in it, just as there are on a rugged mountain side, all of which were of a beautiful blue colour. There were also slopes and crags and precipices, down which the water of the melted ice constantly flowed in wild torrents. Many of these were equal to small rivulets, and some of the waterfalls were beautiful. The berg could not have measured less than a mile round the base, and it was probably two hundred feet high. It is well known that floating ice sinks deep, and that there is about eight or ten times as much of it below as there is above water. The reader may therefore form some idea of what an enormous mass of ice this berg was.

The crew of the Hope observed, in passing, that lumps were continually falling from the cliffs into the sea. The berg was evidently in a very rotten and dangerous state, and the captain ran the brig as close to the pack on the other side as possible, in order to keep out of its way. Just as this was done, some great rents occurred and

suddenly a mass of ice larger than the brig fell from the top of a cliff into the sea. No danger flowed from this, but the mass thus thrown off was so large as to destroy the balance of the berg, and, to the horror of the sailors, the huge mountain began to roll over. Fortunately it fell in a direction away from the brig. Had it rolled towards her, no human power could have saved our voyagers. The mighty mass went over with a wild hollow roar, and new peaks and cliffs rose out of the sea, as the old ones disappeared, with great cataracts of uplifted brine pouring furiously down their sides.

Apart from its danger this was an awful sight. Those who witnessed it could only gaze in solemn silence. Even the most careless among them must have been forced to recognise the might and majesty of God in the event, as well as His mercy in having led them to the *right* side of the berg at such a dangerous moment.

But the scene had not yet closed. For some time the ice mountain rocked grandly to and fro, raising a considerable swell on the sea, which, all round, was covered with the foam caused by this tremendous commotion. In a few minutes several rents took place sounding like the reports of great guns. Rotten as it was, the berg could not stand the shock of its change of position—for it had turned fairly upside down. Crack after crack

took place, with deafening reports. Lumps of all sizes fell from its sides. Then there was a roar, long continued like thunder ; a moment after, the whole berg sank down in ruins, and, with a mighty crash, fell flat upon the sea !

The Hope was beyond the reach of danger, but she rose and sank on the swell caused by the ruin of this berg for some time after.

It was on the afternoon of the same day that the brig received her first really severe "nip" from the ice.

She had got deep into the pack, and was surrounded on all sides by large bergs, some of these being high, like the one that has just been described, others low and flat but of great extent. One, not far off, was two miles long, and its glittering walls rose about fifteen feet above the sea. The sky was brighter than usual at the time. This was owing to one of those strange appearances which one sees more of in the Arctic regions than in any other part of the world. The sun shone with unclouded splendour, and around it there were three mock suns almost as bright as the sun itself, one on each side and one directly above it. Learned men call these bright spots *parhelia*. Sailors call them sun-dogs. They were connected together with a ring of light which entirely encircled the sun, but the lower edge of it was partly lost on the horizon.

Although this was the first time that these mock suns had been seen by Gregory and some others of the crew of the Hope, little attention was paid to them at the time, because of the dangerous position into which the brig had been forced. The pack had again closed all round her, obliging her to take shelter in the lee of a small berg, which, from its shape, did not seem likely to be a dangerous protector.

There was a small bay in the berg. Into this the brig was warped, and for some time she lay safely here. It was just large enough to hold her, and a long tongue of ice, projecting from the foot of it, kept off the pressure of the sea-ice. Nevertheless a look of anxiety rested on the captain's face after the ice-anchors had been made fast.

"You don't seem to like our position, captain," said young Gregory, who had been watching the doings of the men, and now and then lent them a hand.

"I don't, Tom. The pack is closing tight up, and this berg may prove an enemy instead of a friend, if it forces into our harbour here. Let us hear what our mate thinks of it. What say you, Mr. Mansell, shall we hold on here, or warp out, and take our chance in the pack?"

"Better hold on, sir," answered the mate, gravely. "The pack is beginning to grind, we

should get a tight embrace, I fear, if we went out. Here we may do well enough; but everything depends on that tongue."

He looked as he spoke towards the point of ice which extended in front of the brig's stern and guarded the harbour from the outer ice in that direction. The tongue was not a large one, and it was doubtful whether it could stand the pressure that was increasing every minute.

The pack was indeed beginning to "grind," as the mate had said, for, while they were looking at it, the edges of two floes came together with a crash about fifty yards from the berg. They ground together for a moment with a harsh growling sound, and then the two edges were suddenly forced up to a height of about fifteen or twenty feet. Next moment they fell on the closed-up ice and lay there in a mound, or *hummock*, of broken masses.

"That's how a 'ummock is formed, Doctor Gregory," said Mr. Dicey, looking uncommonly wise. "You'll see more things here in five minutes, by means of your own eyes, than ye could learn from books in a year. There's nothin' like seein'. Seein' is believin', you know. I wouldn't give an ounce of experience for a ton of hearsay."

"Come, Mr. Dicey, don't run down book-learning," said Gregory. "If a man only knew

about things that he had seen, he would know very little."

Before the second mate could reply the captain shouted to the men to "Bear a hand with the ice-poles." The whole crew answered to the call, and each man, seizing a long pole, stood ready for action.

The tongue to which I have referred more than once had broken off, and the ice was rushing in. The bay was full in a minute, and although the men used their ice-poles actively and worked with a will, they could not shove the pieces past them. The Hope was driven bow on to the berg. Then there was a strain, a terrible creaking and groaning of the timbers, as if the good little vessel were complaining of the pressure. All at once there was a loud crack, the bow of the brig lifted a little, and she was forced violently up the sloping side of the berg. Twice this happened, and then she remained stationary—high and dry out of the water!

CHAPTER V.

A GALE—NARROW ESCAPES—SIGNS OF WINTER—SET FAST.

DURING the rest of that day and the whole of that night did the brig remain fixed on the berg. Early next morning the ice began to move. It eased off, and the vessel slid gently down the slope on which she had been forced and was re-launched safely into the water.

The satisfaction of the crew, on being thus delivered from a position of much danger, was very great; but they had no sooner escaped from one peril than they were overtaken by another. A sharp breeze sprang up from the eastward, and drove them out into the pack, which began to heave about in a terrible manner under the influence of the wind. Soon this increased to a gale, and the ice was driven along at great speed by a strong northerly current.

While this was going on, land was discovered bearing to the north-east. Here was new danger, for although it was not a lee-shore, still there

was some risk of the vessel being caught among grounded icebergs—of which a few were seen.

The gale increased to such a degree before night that Captain Harvey began to think of taking shelter under the lee of one of these bergs. He therefore stood towards one, but before reaching it the vessel received one or two severe shocks from the passing floes. A large berg lay within half a mile of them. They reached it in safety, and getting under its lee, lowered a boat and fixed their ice-anchors. Just after they were fixed, a mass of ice, the size of a ship's long-boat, and many tons in weight, came suddenly up out of the sea with great violence, the top of it rising above the bulwarks. One corner of it struck the hull just behind the mainmast, and nearly stove in the bottom of the brig.

This lump was what Arctic voyagers term a "calf." When masses of ice break off from the bergs far below the surface of the water, they rise with extreme violence, and ships run great risk of being destroyed by these calves when they anchor too near to the bergs. Had this calf struck the Hope a fair blow she must certainly have gone down with all on board.

They were not yet freed from their troubles, however. In half an hour the wind shifted a few points, but the stream of the loose ice did not change. The brig was therefore blown right in

amongst the rushing masses. The three cables that held her were snapped as if they had been pieces of pack-thread, and she was whirled out into the pack, where she drove helplessly, exposed to the fury of the howling storm and the dangers of the grinding ice. Captain Harvey now felt that he could do nothing to save his vessel. He believed that if God did not mercifully put forth His hand to deliver them by a miracle, he and his companions would certainly perish. In this the captain was wrong. Nothing is impossible to the Almighty. He can always accomplish His purposes without the aid of a miracle.

There did, indeed, seem no way of escape ; for the driving masses of ice were grinding each other to powder in nearly every direction, and the brig only escaped instant destruction by being wedged between two pieces that held together from some unknown cause. Presently they were carried down towards a large berg that seemed to be aground, for the loose ice was passing it swiftly. This was not the case, however. An under-current, far down in the depths of the sea, was acting on this berg, and preventing it from travelling with the ice that floated with the stream at the surface. In it passing, the mass of ice that held them struck one of the projecting tongues beneath the surface and was split in two. The brig was at once set free. As they passed they might

almost have leaped upon the berg. Captain Harvey saw and seized his opportunity.

"Stand by to heave an anchor," he shouted.

Sam Baker, being the strongest man in the ship, sprang to one of the small ice-anchors that lay on the deck with a line attached to it, and lifting it with both hands stood ready.

The brig passed close to the end of the berg, where the lee-side formed a long tail of sheltered water. She was almost thrust into this by the piece of ice from which she had just escaped. She grazed the edge of the berg as she drove past.

"Heave!" shouted the captain.

Sam Baker swung the anchor round his head as if it had been a feather and hurled it far upon the ice. For a few yards it rattled over the slippery surface; then it caught a lump, but the first strain broke it off. Just after that it fell into a crack and held on. The brig was checked, and swung round into the smooth water; but they had to ease off the line lest it should snap. At last she was brought up, and lay safely under the shelter of that berg until the storm was over.

Some weeks flew by after this without anything occurring worthy of particular notice. During this time the Hope made good progress into the Polar regions, without again suffering severely either from ice or storm, although much retarded by the thick fogs that prevail in the Arctic re-

gions. She was indeed almost always surrounded by ice, but it was sufficiently open to allow of a free passage through it. Many whales and seals had been seen, also one or two bears, but not in circumstances in which they could be attacked without occasioning much delay.

The brief summer had now passed away, and the days began to shorten as winter approached. Still Captain Harvey hoped to get farther north before being obliged to search for winter quarters. One morning early in September, however, he found to his sorrow that pancake-ice was forming on the sea. When the sea begins to freeze, it does so in small needle-like spikes, which cross and re-cross each other until they form thin ice, which the motion of the waves breaks up into flat cakes about a foot or so across. These, by constantly rubbing against each other, get worn into a rounded shape. Sailors call this "pancake-ice." It is the first sign of coming winter. The cakes soon become joined together as the frost increases.

The place where this occurred was near to those wild cliffs that rise out of the sea in the channels or straits that lie at the head of Baffin's Bay. The vessel was now beyond the farthest point of land that had been discovered at the time of which I am writing, and already one or two of the headlands had been named by Captain Harvey and marked on his chart.

"I don't like to see pancake-ice so early in the season," remarked the captain to Mr. Mansell.

"No more do I, sir," answered the mate. "This would be a bad place to winter in, I fear."

"Land ahead!" was shouted at that moment by the look-out at the mast-head.

"Keep her away two points," said the captain to the man at the helm. "How does it lie?"

"Right ahead, sir."

"Any ice near it?"

"No, all clear."

The brig was kept a little more out to sea. Soon she came to more open water, and in the course of four hours was close to the land, which proved to be a low barren island not more than a mile across.

Here the wind died away altogether, and a sharp frost set in. The pancakes became joined together, and on the following morning when our friend Gregory came on deck he found that the whole ocean was covered with ice! It did not, indeed, look very like ice, because, being so thin, it did not prevent the usual swell from rolling over the sea. A light breeze was blowing, and the brig cut her way through it for some time; but the breeze soon died away, leaving her becalmed within a quarter of a mile of the island.

For some time the voyagers hoped that a thaw would take place, or that wind would break up

the ice. But they were disappointed. This was the first touch of the cold hand of winter, and the last day of the Hope's advance northward.

Seeing this, Captain Harvey set energetically to work to cut his way into winter quarters, for it would not do to remain all winter in the exposed position in which his vessel then lay. On his right was the island, already referred to, about a quarter of a mile off. Beyond this, about five miles distant, were the high steep cliffs of the western coast of Greenland. Everywhere else lay the open sea, covered here and there with floes and bergs, and coated with new ice.

This ice became so thick in the course of another night that the men could walk on it without danger. By means of saws and chisels made for the purpose they cut a passage towards the island, and finally moored the brig in a small bay which was sheltered on all sides except the east. This, being the land side, required no protection. They name the place "Refuge Harbour."

Every one was now full of activity. The voyagers had reached the spot where they knew they were destined to spend the winter, and much had to be done before they could consider themselves in a fit state to face that terrible season.

Winter in the Polar regions extends over eight months of the year—from September to May. But so much of ice and snow remains there all the

summer, that winter can scarcely be said to quit those regions at all.

It is difficult to imagine what the Arctic winter is. We cannot properly understand the tremendous difficulties and sufferings that men who go to the Polar seas have to fight against. Let the reader think of the following facts, and see if he does not draw his chair closer to the fire and feel thankful that he has not been born an Eskimo, and is not an Arctic seaman!

Winter within the Arctic circle, as I have said, is fully eight months long. During that time the land is covered with snow many feet deep, and the sea with ice of all degrees of thickness—from vast fields of ten or fifteen feet thick to bergs the size of islands and mountains,—all frozen into one solid mass.

There is no sunlight there, night or day, for three out of these eight winter months, and there is not much during the remaining five. In summer there is perpetual sunlight, all night as well as all day for about two months,—for many weeks the sun never descends below the horizon. It is seen every day and every night sweeping a complete circle in the bright blue sky. Having been so free of his light in summer, the sun seems to think he has a right to absent himself in winter, for the three months of darkness that I have spoken of are not months of *partial* but of *total*

darkness—as far at least as the sun is concerned. The moon and stars and the "Northern Lights" do indeed give their light when the fogs and clouds will allow them; but no one will say that these make up for the absence of the sun.

Then the frost is so intense that everything freezes solid except pure spirits of wine. Unless you have studied the thermometer you cannot understand the intensity of this frost; but for the sake of those who do know something about extreme cold, I give here a few facts that were noted down during the winter that my story tells of.

On the 10th of September these ice-bound voyagers had eighteen degrees of frost, and the darkness had advanced on them so rapidly that it was dark about ten at night. By the 1st of October the ice round the brig was a foot and a half thick. Up to this time they had shot white hares on the island, and the hunting parties that crossed the ice to the mainland, shot deer and musk oxen, and caught white foxes in traps. Gulls and other birds, too, had continued to fly round them; but most of these went away to seek warmer regions farther south. Walrus and seals did not leave so soon. They remained as long as there was any open water out at sea. The last birds that left them (and the first that returned in spring) were the "snow-birds"—little creatures about the size of a sparrow, almost white with a few brown

feathers here and there. The last of these fled from the darkening winter on the 7th November, and did not return until the 1st of the following May. When they left, it was dark almost all day. The thermometer could scarcely be read at noon, and the stars were visible during the day. From this time forward thick darkness set in, and the cold became intense. The thermometer fell *below* zero, and after that they never saw it *above* that point for months together; 20, 30, and 40 degrees below, were common temperatures. The ice around them was ten feet thick. On the 1st of December noon was so dark that they could not see fifty yards ahead, and on the 15th the fingers could not be counted a foot from the eyes. The thermometer stood at 40_0 below zero.

The darkness could not now become greater, but the cold still continued to grow more intense. It almost doubled in severity. In January it fell to 67° below zero! So great was this cold that the men felt impelled to breathe guardedly. The breath issued from their mouths in white clouds of steam and instantly settled on their beards and whiskers in hoar-frost. In the cabin of the Hope they had the utmost difficulty in keeping themselves moderately warm at this time.

Things had now reached their worst, and by slow degrees matters began to mend. On the 22d of January the first faint sign of returning day

appeared—just a blue glimmer on the horizon. By the middle of February the light tipped the tops of the mountains on shore, and the highest peaks of the ice-bergs on the sea, and on the 1st of March it bathed the deck of the Hope. Then the long imprisoned crew began to feel that spring was really coming. But there was little heat in the sun's rays at first, and it was not till the month of May that the ice out at sea broke up and summer could be said to have begun.

During all this long winter—during all these wonderful changes, our Arctic voyagers had a hard fight in order to keep themselves alive. Their life was a constant struggle. They had to fight the bears and the walrus ; to resist the cold and the darkness ; to guard against treachery from the natives ; and to suffer pains, sickness, and trials, such as seldom fall to the lot of men in ordinary climates.

How they did and suffered all this, I shall try to show in the following pages. In attempting this I shall make occasional extracts from the journal of our friend Tom Gregory, for Tom kept his journal regularly, and was careful to note down only what he heard and saw.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATIONS FOR WINTERING—REMARKABLE ADVENTURES WITH A BEAR.

THE first care of Captain Harvey, after getting his brig securely laid up in her icy cradle for the winter, was to remove some of the stores to the island, where he had them carefully secured in a little hut which the crew built of loose stones. This relieved the strain on the vessel, and permitted the free circulation of air. The fitting up of the interior of the brig was then begun.

The wooden partition between the cabin and the hold was taken down, and the whole space thrown into one apartment. The stove was put up in the centre of it, and moss was piled round the walls inside about a foot thick. Moss was also spread on the deck, and above it the snow was allowed to gather, for snow, although so cold itself, keeps things that it covers warm, by not permitting the heat to escape. The brig was banked up all round with snow, and a regular snowy staircase was built from the ice to her bulwarks.

They changed their time, now, from what is called sea-time to that which we follow on land. That is to say, they reckoned the day to commence just after twelve midnight, instead of dividing it into watches as they were wont to do at sea. Journals were begun and careful notes made of everything that occurred, or that might in any way further the object for which they had gone there. Every man in the ship had his appointed duty and his post. If the native Eskimos should arrive in a warlike temper, each man had his cutlas and pistols in readiness. If a bear should pay them a visit, each could lay hands on his musket in an instant; and if a fire should break out on board, every man had his bucket ready and his particular post fixed. Some were to run to the water-hole, which it was the duty of one man to keep open. Others were to station themselves from the hole to the ship to pass the buckets, while the rest were to remain on board to convey them to the point of danger. Captain Harvey fixed all the arrangements and superintended the carrying out of his orders in a general way, making his two officers and the young doctor responsible for the overseeing of details. Each of these foremen furnished him with a report every night of what had been done during the day, and the result was noted down by himself in a journal. Thus everything went smoothly and pleasantly

along during the first weeks of their sojourn in their frozen home.

In regard to fresh provisions they were fortunate at first, for they obtained sufficient supplies of deer and other game. This was in the early part of winter, while there was still plenty of day-light. In Tom Gregory's journal I find it thus written :—

"*September* 10*th.*—The days are beginning to shorten now, and we are all busily occupied in preparing for the long dark winter that is before us. Sam Baker, who is the best shot among us, brought in a deer to-day. This is fortunate, for we stand in need of fresh meat. Our greatest enemy this winter, I fear, will be scurvy. Unless we obtain a large supply of fresh provisions we cannot hope tc escape it. Crofts brought in two Arctic hares. They are beautiful creatures—pure white—and each weighs about seven pounds. These, with the four deer shot by myself last week, and the ten hares got by Baker, will keep us going for some time.

"*September* 12*th.*—I had an adventure with a polar bear last night which has amused the men very much and given them food for jocularity for a few days. Some days back Davy Butts set a trap on the island, in which he has caught a few foxes. Last night his long legs were so tired that he did not care to visit his trap, so I offered to go instead of him. It was while I was out on this

errand that I happened to meet with bruin. Our meeting was sudden and unexpected on both sides, I believe. It was midnight when I set off to the trap, which was not more than half a mile from the ship, and it was quite dark when I reached it.

"Davy is an ingenious fellow. His trap is made of four blocks of hard snow, with a sort of wooden trigger that goes off the moment the bait is touched, and allows a heavy log to fall down on the poor fox's back. There was no fox there, however, when I reached it. I went down on my knees and was examining the bait when I heard a low growl. I leaped up and felt for the knife which I usually carried in my belt. It was not there! In the haste of my departure from the ship I had forgotten to buckle it on. I had no gun of course. It was too dark to shoot, and I had not counted on meeting with any dangerous enemy. I could only crouch down behind a lump of ice and hope that the bear would go away, but another growl, much louder than the first and close at hand, showed that I had been seen. It was so dark that I could hardly see fifty yards ahead. There was a great chasm or hole just in front of me. This was the place where the main body of the sea-ice had been separated from the shore-ice that was aground. Here every rise and fall of the tide had broken it afresh, so that the rent was twenty yards wide, and full of

large blocks that had been tossed about in confusion. Across this I gazed into the gloom and thought I saw an object that looked like a large block of rounded ice. Before I could make up my mind how to act the block of ice rose up with a furious roar and charged me. The chasm checked him for a moment. But for this I should have been caught immediately. While he was scrambling over it I took to my heels and ran along the edge of the ice at the top of my speed.

"There was a narrow part of the chasm which I had looked at in daylight and wondered whether I might venture to leap across it. I had made up my mind that it was too wide and dangerous to be attempted. But it is wonderful how quickly a man changes his mind on such a point when a polar bear is roaring at his heels. I came to the gap in the ice. It was ten feet deep and thirteen or fourteen feet across. The jagged lumps of ice at the bottom lay there in horrible confusion. There was barely light enough to see where the hole was when I came within ten yards of it, but I did not hesitate. A rush! a bound! and I went over like a cat. Not so the bear. He had not measured the place with his eye in daylight as I had done. He made a gallant leap, it is true, but fell short, as I knew from the bursting sound and the growl of rage with which he came against the edge of the ice and fell back among the broken blocks.

I did not wait to see how he got out you may be sure, but ran as I never ran before in all my life! I reached the brig quite out of breath. The bear had not followed me up, for I did not see him that night again. Long Davy laughed at me a good deal, and said he was sure I had been frightened at a shadow. It gave a wonderfully loud roar for a shadow! I hope that Davy himself may get a chase before the winter is over, just to convince him of his error in not believing me!"

The kind wish thus expressed in the young doctor's journal was gratified sooner than might have been expected.

Only two days after the incident above described, poor Davy Butts met with the same bear, face to face, and had a run for his life that turned the laugh from Tom Gregory to himself.

It was on the afternoon of a clear cold day just about sunset. The men had finished dinner and were smoking their pipes on deck, stamping their feet and slapping their hands and arms to keep them warm.

"Hallo, Davy! where are you bound for?" inquired the captain on observing that Butts was wrapping himself carefully in his fur coat, tightening his belt and putting on his mittens, as if bent on a long journey.

"I'm only goin' to take a look at my fox-trap, sir, if you'll allow me."

"Certainly, my lad. If you get a fox it's well worth the trouble. And hark'ee, Davy, take your axe, and make one or two more of these snow-traps of yours. It will be a well-spent hour."

"Why, Butts," exclaimed Gregory, "what do you mean to do with that big horse-pistol? Surely you are not afraid of bears after laughing so much at the one that chased me?"

"Oh no, not *afraid*, you know," replied Davy. "But there's no harm in being armed."

"Mind you shoot him straight in the eye, or send a bullet up his nose. Them's the wulnerable parts of him," cried Joe Davis, with a laugh, as Butts went down the snow-steps and got upon the ice.

"I say," cried Pepper, as he was moving away.

"Well?"

"Bring his tongue aboard with you and I'll cook it for supper."

"Ah, and a bit of fat to fry it in," added the steward. "There's nothin' like tongue fried in bears' grease."

"No, no, Dawkins," said Mr. Dicey. "Hallo! Davy, bring the 'ams. Bears' 'ams are considered fustrate heatin'."

"No, *don't* bring the hams," shouted Jim Croft, "fetch the tongue, that's the thing for supper of a cold night—fetch the tongue, lad."

"Hold your own tongue," shouted Davy, in reply, as he went off amid the laughter of his comrades.

The sun sank soon after, and before the ingenious seaman had finished two new traps the short twilight had gradually deepened into night. Still there was plenty of light, for the sky was clear and studded with a host of stars. In addition to this the Aurora Borealis was sending its beautiful flashes of pale-green light all across the western sky.

The Aurora—which also goes by the names of "Northern Lights," and "Streamers," and "Merry-dancers"—is seen in great splendour in these northern skies. When the seaman had finished his traps and looked up for a minute or two at the sky, before starting on his return to the ship, he beheld the Aurora extending over the heavens in the form of an irregular arch. It was extremely bright, but the brightness was not the same in all parts. It moved and waved gently about like a band of thin green fire. Every now and then long tongues or streamers darted up from it, and these were brighter than the rest. They were yellowish white, and sometimes became pale pink in colour. The light from this beautiful object was equal to that of the moon in her quarter, and the stars that were behind it shone dimly through, as if they were covered with a thin gauze veil.

While Davy was gazing in wonder at the splendid lights above him, a deep growl fell upon his ear.

If the man had been a Jack-in-the-box he could not have leaped more quickly round. His pistol was out and cocked in a moment!

The growl was followed by a roar, which drove all the blood back into Davy's heart and seemed to freeze it there—solid.

The man was no coward, as was quite clear, for at first he boldly stood his ground. But he would have been more than mortal if he had not felt some strange qualms about his heart when he saw a large white bear rushing furiously towards him. The animal came this time from the interior of the small island. The seaman knew well the place over which young Gregory had jumped when he had been chased. After wavering for a moment or two he turned and fled. Another tremendous roar helped him over the ice like a deer, and he took the chasm with a bound like an India-rubber ball.

It must certainly have been the same animal that chased Gregory, for, instead of trying to leap the chasm, it went to another part of the rent and scrambled across. This gave Butts time to increase the distance between them, but a man is no match for a polar bear in a race. The monster was soon close up with him and the ship still far off. The man knew his danger; he turned, took a quick aim, and fired. He missed, of course; flung the pistol in desperation in the bear's face

and ran on. The pistol happened to stick in the snow with the butt in the air, and when the bear came up to it he stopped to smell it!

It is well known, now-a-days, that polar bears are full of curiosity, and will stop for a few minutes to examine anything that comes in their way, even when they are in full chase of a man. Davy Butts knew nothing of this at the time; but he was a quick-witted fellow. He observed this stopping of the bear, and determined to give him something more to stop at.

When bruin was close at his heels he threw down his cap. The bear at once pulled up, smelt it all round, tossed it into the air with his snout, pawed it once or twice, then tore it to pieces with one wrench, and continued the chase. Very little time was lost in this operation. He was soon up with the man again, then a mitten was thrown down for his inspection. After that the other mitten went, the cravat followed, and the axe went next. All that I have just related happened in a very few minutes. Davy was still a good quarter of a mile from the brig; everything that he could tear off his person in haste and throw down was gone, and the bear was once more coming up behind. As a last hope he pulled off his heavy fur coat and dropped it. This seemed to be a subject of great interest to the bear, for it was longer of inspecting it than the other things. And

now poor Butts went tearing along like a maniac in his flannel shirt and trousers. He was a miserable and curious object, for his body, besides being very long, was uncommonly lankey, and his legs and arms seemed to go like the wings of a windmill. Never since the day of his birth had David Butts run at such a pace, in such light clothing, and in such severe frost!

A long line of low hummocks hid him from the brig. The moment he passed these he came in sight of her and began to yell.

"Wot on airth is yon?" exclaimed Joe Davis, who chanced to be looking over the gangway when this remarkable object appeared.

"The wild man o' the North himself, or my name aint Jim," said Crofts, turning pale.

"Why, it's Davy Butts I do believe," cried Sam Baker, who came on deck at that moment.

Just then the bear came tearing round the end of the hummocks in full chase.

"Hurrah! hallo! ho!" roared the men who had crowded on deck at the first note of alarm.

Sam Baker seized a heavy ash handspike, about five feet long, and was on his way to meet his comrade before the others had gained the ice. They were not slow, however. Some with muskets, some with pistols and cutlasses, and some with nothing but their fists—all followed Sam, who who was now far ahead.

Baker passed Davy without a remark and ran straight at the bear, which stopped on seeing such a big powerful man running so furiously at him, and flourishing a bludgeon that would almost have suited the hand of a giant. But polar bears are not timid. He rose on his hind legs at once, and paid no attention whatever to the tremendous crack that Sam dealt him over the skull. The blow broke the handspike in two, and the foolhardy seaman would soon have paid for his rashness with his life had not friendly and steady hands been near. Nothing daunted, he was about to repeat the blow with the piece of the handspike that was still in his grasp, and the bear was about to seize him with its claws, each of which were full two inches long, when the first mate and Gregory came running towards them side by side; the first armed with a rifle, the doctor with pistols.

"Too late," gasped Gregory.

"We must fire," said Mansell, "and risk hitting Sam. Here, doctor, you are a good shot; take the rifle."

The young man obeyed, dropped on one knee and took aim, but did not fire. Sam was between him and the bear. A sudden movement changed their positions. The side of the monster came into view, and in another instant it was stretched on the ice with a bullet in its brain.

CHAPTER VII.

A GREAT BATTLE WITH THE WALRUS.

IT need scarcely be said that there was a jovial feast that night at supper. The bear's tongue was cooked after all, but the impudent tongues of the party were not silenced, for they almost worried the life out of poor Davy for having run away from a bear.

Soon after this event the preparations for spending the winter were completed; at least as far as the fitting up of the vessel was concerned.

"This morning," writes Gregory in his journal, "we finished housing over our Arctic home. The Hope is very snug, lined with moss and almost covered with snow. A sail has been spread over the quarter-deck like an awning; it is also covered with moss and snow. This, we hope, will give much additional warmth to our house below. We all live together now, men and officers. It will require our united strength to fight successfully against that terrible enemy John Frost. John is king of the Arctic regions undoubtedly!

"Dawkins got a cold-bath yesterday that amused the men much and did him no harm. For some time past we have been carrying moss from the island in large bundles. Dawkins got leave to help, as he said he was sick-tired of always working among stores. He was passing close to the fire-hole with a great bundle of moss on his back, when his foot slipped and down he went. This hole is kept constantly open. It is Baker's duty night and morning to break the ice, and have it ready in case of fire. The ice on the surface was therefore thin; in a moment nothing was to be seen of poor Dawkins but his bundle! Fortunately he held tight on to it, and we hauled him out soaked to the skin. The thermometer stood at 35° below zero, the coldest day we have had up to this time; and in two minutes the unfortunate man's clothes were frozen so stiff that he could scarcely walk! We had to break the ice on his legs and arms at the joints, and even then he had to be half hoisted on board and carried below. We all dress in seal-skin and fox-skin garments now. Dawkins had on a rough coat made of white and grey foxes; trousers of the same; boots of sealskin, and mittens ditto. When all this was soaked and frozen he was truly a humbling sight!

"The undressing of him was a labour of difficulty as well as of love. However, when he was rubbed dry, and re-clothed, he was none the worse.

Indeed, I am inclined to think he was much the better of his ducking.

"To-morrow we are to make some curious experiments with boats, sledges, and kites. The captain is anxious to take our largest boat over the ice as far to the south as possible and leave her there with a quantity of provisions, so that we may have her to fall back upon if any misfortune should befall the brig, which I earnestly pray that God may forbid.

"Davy Butts, who is an ingenious fellow in his way, says that we can sail a boat on the ice almost as well as on the water, and that we may drag sledges by means of kites if we choose. The captain means to attempt a journey to the north with sledges in spring, so, if the kites answer, Butts will have done us good service. But I have my doubts.

"The nights are closing in fast; very soon we shall be without the sun altogether. But the moon is cheering us. Last night (28th October) she swept in a complete circle round the sky *all day* as well as all night. She only touched the horizon, and then, instead of setting, she rose again as if the frozen sea had frightened her.

"*October 30th.*—Baker came in to-day and reported open water about six miles off, and walrus sporting in it. I shall set out to-morrow on a hunt."

The hunt which the young doctor here wrote of, came off on the following day, but it was a very different one from what any of the men had expected.

Early in the morning, Baker, Davy Butts, and Gregory set off on foot, armed with a rifle and two muskets, besides a couple of harpoons, a whale-lance, and a long line. They also took a small sledge, which was intended to be used in hauling home the meat if they should be successful. Three hours' hard walking brought the party to the edge of the solid ice, after which they travelled on the floes that were being constantly broken by the tides, and were only joined together by ice of a night or two old. This was little more than an inch thick, so they had to advance with caution.

Presently the loud mooing of a bull walrus was heard. Its roar was something between the lowing of a bull and the bark of a large dog, but much louder, for the walrus resembles an elephant in size more than any other animal. Soon after they came in sight of their game. Five walrus were snorting and barking in a hole which they had broken in the ice. The way in which this huge monster opens a hole when he wants to get out of the sea, is, to come up from below with considerable violence and send his head crashing through the ice.

The three men now became very wary. They crept on their hands and knees behind the ice

hummocks until within about a hundred yards of the brutes. Then they ascended a small hummock to take a look round and decide on their plan of operations. While lying there, flat on their faces, they took particular care to keep their heads well concealed; just raising them high enough to observe the position of the walrus. There was a sheet of flat ice between them and the hole, so that it was impossible to advance nearer without being seen. This perplexed them much, for although their bullets might hit at that distance they would not be able to run in quick enough to use their lances, and the harpoons would be of no use at all.

While thus undecided what to do they were unexpectedly taught a lesson in walrus hunting that surprised them not a little.

"Hallo! there's a bear!" whispered Davy Butts, as a hairy object crawled out from behind an ice-hummock about two hundred yards from the place where they lay and made towards the walrus in a sly cat-like manner.

"More like a seal," observed Baker.

"A seal! why it's a *man!*" said Gregory in a low excited whisper.

"So it is, sure enough," said Baker; "it must be an Eskimo, though his hairy garments make him look more like a bear than a man, and as the fellow has got here before us I suppose we must give up our claim to the brutes."

"Time enough to talk of that when the brutes are killed," said Gregory with a smile. "But lie still, lads. We will take a lesson from this fellow, who has been so earnestly staring at the walrus that he has not noticed us."

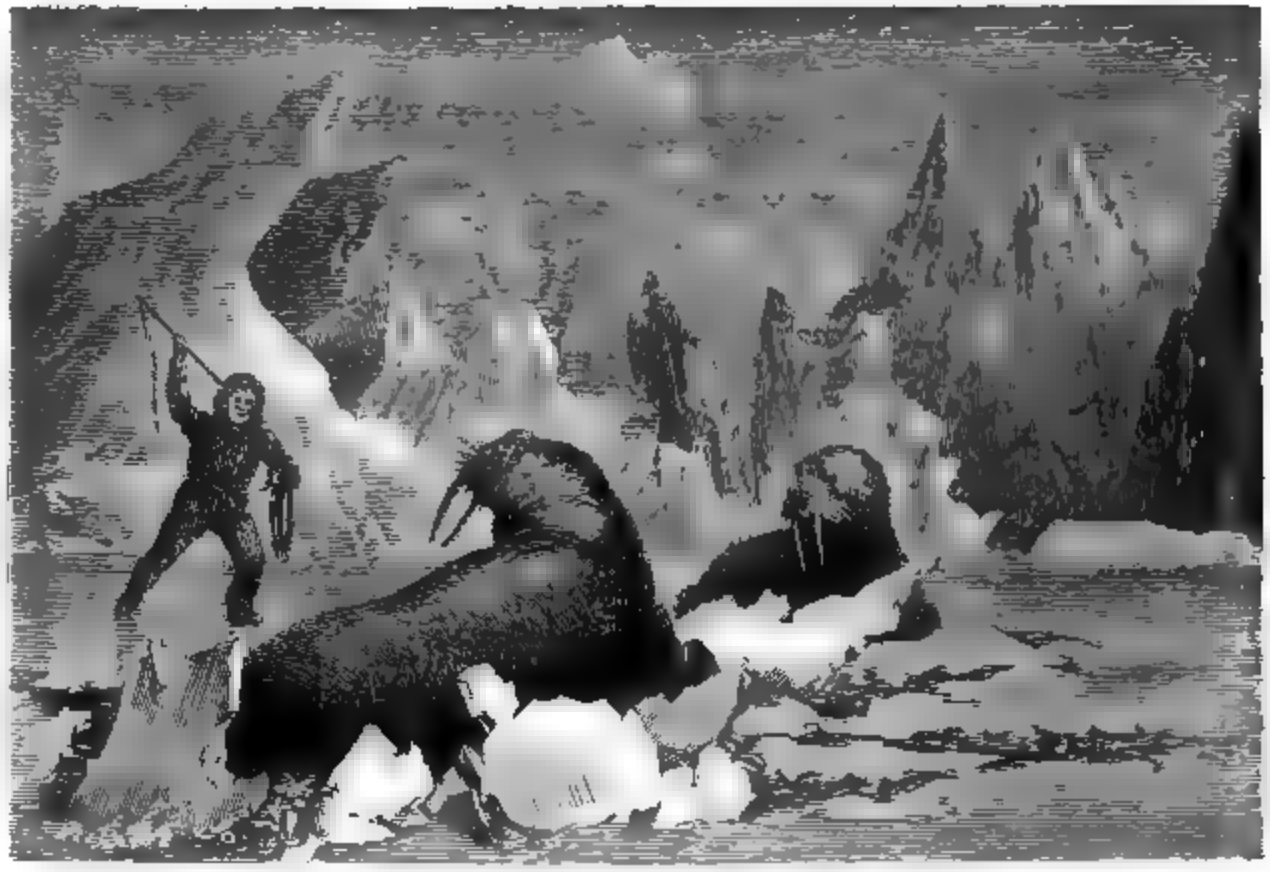
The three men lay perfectly motionless watching the native, who crept as near to the hole as he could without being seen, and then waited for a few minutes until the creatures should dive. This they were constantly doing; staying down a few moments at a time, and then coming up to breathe—for the walrus cannot live without air. He is not a fish, and although he can stay down a long time, he *must* come to the surface occasionally to breathe. In this he resembles the seal and the whale.

Presently, down they all went with a tremendous splash. Now was the moment! the Eskimo rose, ran at full speed for a few yards, then fell flat on his face and lay quite still as if he had been shot dead. The reason of this was soon apparent. He understood the habits of the walrus and knew that they would rise again. This they did almost the moment after and began their snorting, bellowing, and rolling again. Once more they dived. Up got the Eskimo, ran a few yards farther forward, and then fell flat down as before. In this way he got near to the hole without being seen.

The watchers observed that he carried a harpoon and a coil of thick line.

The next time the walrus dived, he ran to the edge of the hole, but now, instead of falling down, he stood quite still with the harpoon raised above his head ready to be thrown. In a few moments the monsters re-appeared. Two rose close at the edge of the hole; one was a male, the other a female. They were frightfully ugly to look at. Shaking the water from his head and shoulders the bull at once caught sight of the man who had thus suddenly appeared. At that instant the Eskimo threw up his left arm. This action instead of frightening the brutes away caused them to raise themselves high out of the water, in order to have a good look at the strange creature who had thus dared to disturb them in their watery home. This was just what the native wanted. It gave him a chance of driving the harpoon under the flipper of the male. The instant this was done he caught up the end of his coil and ran quickly back to the full length of the line.

The battle that now began was perhaps one of the fiercest that was ever fought in the Arctic regions. The walrus lashed the water furiously for a second or two and dived. This checked the native, who at once stopped running, drove the sharp point of a little piece of wood into the ice and put the loop at the end of his line over it. He pressed the loop close down to the ice with his



THE WALRUS HUNT.

feet, so that he could hold on when it tightened, which it did with great force. But the line was a stout one. It had been cut from the hide of a walrus and prepared in a peculiar way for the purpose of standing a heavy strain.

The Eskimo now played the monster as an angler plays a trout. At one moment he held on, the next he eased off. The line was sometimes like a bar of iron, then it was slackened off as the animal rose and darted about. After this had happened once or twice the bull came to the surface, blowing tremendously, and began to bark and roar in great fury. The female came up at the same time. She evidently meant to stick by her partner and share his danger. The others had dived and made off at the first sign of war.

The wounded walrus was a little flurried and very angry; the female was not at all frightened, she was passionately furious! Both of them tore up the ice tables with their great ivory tusks, and glared at their enemy with an expression that there was no mistaking. The walrus is well known to be one of the fiercest animals in the world. Woe to the poor native if he had been caught by these monsters at that time.

After somes minutes spent in uselessly smashing the ice and trying to get at the native, they both dived. Now came into play the Eskimo's know-

ledge of the animal's habits and his skill in this curious kind of warfare. Before diving they looked steadily at the man for a second and then swam under the ice straight for the spot where he stood. The Eskimo of course could not see this, but he knew it from past experience. He therefore changed his position instantly; ran a few yards to one side and planted his stick and loop again. This had hardly been done when the ice burst up with a loud crash; a hole of more than fifteen feet wide was made on the exact spot which the man had quitted, and the walrus appeared with a puff like that of a steam-engine and a roar that would have done credit to a lion.

The great lumpish-looking heads and square cut faces of the creatures looked frightful at this point in the fight. There was something like human intelligence in their malicious and brutal faces, as the water poured down their cheeks and over their bristling beards, mingled with blood and foam.

At this moment there was a shout close at hand, and two other Eskimos ran out from behind the ice-hummocks and joined their comrade. They were armed with long lances, the handles of which were made of bone, and the points of beautiful white ivory tipped with steel. It was afterwards discovered that these natives obtained small pieces of iron and steel from the Eskimos farther south,

who were in the habit of trading at the settlements on the coast of Greenland.

The strangers at once ran to the edge of the pool and gave the bull walrus two deep wounds with their lances. They also wounded the female. This seemed to render them more furious than ever. They dived again. The first Eskimo again shifted his position and the others ran back a short distance. They were not a moment too soon in these changes, for the ice was again burst upward at the spot they had just quitted, and the enraged beasts once more came bellowing to the surface and vented their fury on the ice.

It may seem almost incredible to the reader, *but it is a fact*, that this battle lasted fully four hours. At the end of the third hour it seemed to the sailors who were watching it, that the result was still doubtful, for the Eskimos were evidently becoming tired while the monsters of the Polar seas were still furious.

"I think we might help them with a bullet," whispered Baker. "It might frighten them perhaps, but it would save them a good deal of trouble."

"Wait a little longer," replied Gregory. "I have it in my mind to astonish them. You see they have wounded the female very badly, but when the male dies, which he cannot now be long of doing, she will dive and make off, and so

they'll lose her, for they don't seem to have another harpoon and line."

"Perhaps they have one behind the hummocks," suggested Davy Butts, whose teeth were chattering in his head with cold.

"If they had, they would have used it long ago," said Gregory. "At any rate I mean to carry out my plan—which is this. When the bull is about dead I will fire at the female and try to hit her in a deadly part so as to kill her at once. Then, Sam, you will run out with our harpoon and dart it into her to prevent her sinking, or diving if she should not be killed. And you, Davy, will follow me and be ready with a musket."

This plan had just been settled when the bull walrus began to show signs of approaching death. Gregory therefore took a deliberate aim with the rifle and fired. The result was startling! The female walrus began to roll and lash about furiously, smashing the ice and covering the sea around with bloody foam. At first the Eskimos stood motionless—rooted to the spot, as if they had been thunderstruck. But when they saw Sam Baker dart from behind the hummock, flourishing his harpoon, followed by Gregory and Butts, their courage deserted them; they turned in terror and fled.

On getting behind the hummocks, however,

they halted and peeped over the ledges of ice to see what the seamen did.

Sam Baker, being an old whaleman, darted his harpoon cleverly and held fast the struggling animal. At the same time Davy Butts seized the end of the line which the natives had thrown down in terror, and held on to the bull. It was almost dead and quite unable to show any more fight. Seeing that all was right, Gregory now laid down his rifle and advanced slowly to the hummock behind which the Eskimos had taken refuge.

He knew, from the reports of previous travellers, that holding up both arms is a sign of peace with the Eskimos. He therefore stopped when within a short distance of the hummocks and held up his arms. The signal was understood at once. The natives leaped upon the top of the hummock and held up their arms in reply. Again Gregory tossed up his and made signs to them to draw near. This they did without hesitation, and the doctor shook them by the hand and patted their hairy shoulders. They were all of them stout well-made fellows, about five feet seven or eight inches high, and very broad across the shoulders. They were fat, too, and oily-faced, jolly-looking men. They smiled and talked to each other for a few moments and then spoke to Gregory, but when he shook his head, as much as to say, "I

don't understand you," they burst into a loud laugh. Then they suddenly became grave, and ran at full speed towards the hole where the walrus floated.

Davy Butts made the usual sign of friendship, and handed them the end of their line, which they seized and set about securing their prize without taking any farther notice of their new friends.

The manner in which these wild yet good-natured fellows hauled the enormous carcase out of the water was simple and ingenious. They made four cuts in the neck, about two inches apart from each other, and raised the skin between these cuts, thus making two bands. Through one of these bands they passed a line and carried it to a stick made fast in the ice, where they passed it through a loop of well-greased hide. It was then carried back to the animal, made to pass under the second band and the end was hauled in by the Eskimos. This formed a sort of double purchase that enabled them to pull out of the hole a carcase which double their numbers could not have hauled up.

Some idea of the bull's weight may be formed when I say that the carcase was eighteen feet long, and eleven feet in circumference at the thickest part. There were no fewer than sixty deep lance-wounds in various parts of its body.

When seen close at hand the walrus is a very ugly monster. It is something like a gigantic seal, having two large flippers or fins near its shoulders, and two others behind that look like its tail. It uses these in swimming, but can also use them on land, so as to crawl, or rather to bounce forward in a clumsy fashion. By means of its fore flippers it can raise itself high out of the water and get upon the ice and rocks. It is fond of doing this, and is often found sleeping in the sunshine on the ice and on rocks. It has even been known to scramble up the side of an island to a height of a hundred feet, and there lie basking in the sun.

Nevertheless, the water is the proper element of the walrus. All its motions are clumsy and slow until it gets into the sea; there it is "at home." Its upper face has a square bluff look, and its broad muzzle and cheeks are covered by a coarse beard of bristles like quills. The two white tusks point downwards. In this they are unlike to those of the elephant. The tusks of the bull killed on this occasion were thirty inches long. The hide of the walrus is nearly an inch thick, and is covered with close short hair. Beneath the skin he has a thick layer of fat, and this enables him to resist the extreme cold in the midst of which he dwells.

The walrus is of great value to the Eskimos.

But for it and the seal, these poor members of the human family could not exist at all in those frozen regions. As it is, it costs them a severe struggle to keep the life in their bodies. But they do not complain of what seems to us a hard lot. They have been born to it. They know no happier condition of life. They wish for no better home, and the All-wise Creator has fitted them admirably, both in mind and body, to live and even to enjoy life in a region where most other men could live only in great discomfort, if they could exist at all.

The Eskimos cut the walrus' thick hide into long lines with which they hunt—as we have seen. They do not cut these lines in strips and join them in many places; but, beginning at one end of the skin they cut round and round without break to the centre, and thus secure a line of many fathoms in length.

It is truly said that "necessity is the mother of invention." These natives have no wood. Not a single tree grows in the whole land of which I am writing. There are plenty of plants, grasses, mosses, and beautiful flowers in summer—growing, too, close beside ice-fields that remain unmelted all the year round. But there is not a tree large enough to make a harpoon of. Consequently the Eskimos are obliged to make sledges of bones; and as the bones and tusks of the walrus are not big

enough for this purpose, they tie and piece them together in a remarkably neat and ingenious manner.

Sometimes, indeed, they find pieces of drift-wood in the sea. Wrecks of whale-ships, too, are occasionally found by the natives in the south of Greenland. A few pieces of the precious wood obtained in this way are exchanged from one tribe to another, and so find their way north. But the further north we go, the fewer pieces of this kind of wood do we find; and in the far north, where our adventurous voyagers were now ice-bound, the Eskimos have very little wood indeed.

Food is the chief object which the Eskimo has in view when he goes out to do battle with the walrus. Its flesh is somewhat coarse, no doubt, but it is excellent nourishing food notwithstanding, and although a well-fed Englishman might turn up his nose at it, many starving Englishmen have smacked their lips over walrus-beef in days gone by,—ay, and have eaten it raw, too, with much delight!

Let not my reader doubt the truth of this. Well-known and truth-loving men have dwelt for a time in those regions, and some of these have said that they actually came to *prefer* the walrus flesh raw, because it was more strengthening, and fitted them better for undertaking long and trying journeys in extremely cold weather. One of the

most gallant men who ever went to the Polar seas (Dr. Kane of the American navy) tells us in his delightful book,* that he frequently ate raw flesh, and liked it, and that the Eskimos often eat it raw. In fact, they are not particular. They will eat it cooked or raw—just as happens to be most convenient for them.

When the animals, whose killing I have described, were secured, the Eskimos proceeded to skin and cut them up. The sailors of course assisted, and learned a lesson. While this was going on one of their number went away for a short time and soon returned with a sledge drawn by about a dozen dogs. This they loaded with the meat and hide of the bull, intending evidently to leave the cow to their new friends, as being their property. But Gregory thought they were entitled to a share of it, so, after loading his sledge with a considerable portion of the meat he gave them the remainder along with the hide.

This pleased them mightily and caused them to talk much, though to little purpose. However, Gregory made good use of the language of signs. He also delighted them with the gift of a brass ring, an old knife, and a broken pencil-case, and made them understand that his abode was not far distant, by drawing the figure of a walrus in a hole

* "Arctic Explorations."

on the snow, and then a thing like a bee-hive at some distance from it, pointing northward at the same time. He struck a harpoon into the outline of the walrus to show that it was the animal that had just been killed, and then went and lay down in the picture of the bee-hive to show that he dwelt there.

The natives understood this quite well. They immediately drew another bee-hive, pointed to the south and to the sun and held up five fingers. From this it was understood that their village was five days distant from the spot where they then were.

He next endeavoured to purchase three of their dogs, but they objected to this, and refused to accept of three knives as a price for them. They were tempted, however, by the offer of a whale harpoon and a hemp line, and at last agreed to let him have three of their best dogs. This the young doctor considered a piece of great good fortune, and being afraid that they would repent he prepared to leave the place at once. The dogs were fastened by lines to the sledge of their new masters. A whip was made out of a stripe of walrus hide, a bone served for a handle, and away they went for the brig at a rattling pace, after bidding the natives farewell and making them understand that they hoped to meet again in the course of the winter.

Thus happily ended their first meeting with the Eskimos. It may well be believed that there was both astonishment and satisfaction on board the Hope that night when the hunting party returned, much sooner than had been expected, with the whip cracking, the men cheering, the dogs howling, and the sledge well laden with fresh meat.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CAUSE OF ICE-BERGS—FOX-CHASE—A BEAR.

ONE day, long after the walrus-hunt just described, Joe Davis stood on the deck of the Hope leaning over the side and looking out to sea—at least in the direction of the sea, for, although mid-day, it was so dark that he could not see very far in any direction. Joe was conversing with Mr. Dicey on the appearance of things around him.

"Do you know, Mr. Dicey," said he, "wot it is as causes them there ice-bergs?"

Mr. Dicey looked very grave and wise for a few seconds without answering. Then he said, in rather a solemn tone, "Well, Davis, to tell you the real truth, I *don't* know!"

Now, as this question is one of considerable interest, I shall endeavour to answer it for the benefit of the reader.

The whole of the interior of Greenland is covered with ice and snow. This snowy covering does not resemble that soft snow which falls on our own

hills. It is hard, and *never* melts entirely away. The snow there is in some places a thousand feet thick! It covers all the hill-tops and fills up all the valleys, so that the country may be said to be a buried land. Since the world began, perhaps, snow has been falling on it every winter; but the summers there have been so short that they could not melt away the snow of one winter before that of another came and covered it up and pressed it down. Thus, for ages, the snow of one year has been added to that which was left of the preceding, and the pressure has been so great that the mass has been squeezed nearly as hard as pure ice.

The ice that has been formed in this way is called *glacier;* and the glaciers of Greenland cover, as I have said, the whole country, so that it can never be cultivated or inhabited by man unless the climate change. There are glaciers of this kind in many other parts of the world. We have them in Switzerland and in Norway, but not on nearly so large a scale as in Greenland.

Now, although this glacier-ice is clear and hard, it is not quite so solid as pure ice, and when it is pushed down into the valleys by the increasing masses above it actually *flows.* But this flowing motion cannot be seen. It is like the motion of the hour hand of a watch which cannot be perceived however closely it may be looked at. You

might go to one of the valleys of Greenland and gaze at a glacier for days together but you would see no motion whatever. All would appear solid, frozen up, and still. But notice a block of stone lying on the surface of the glacier, and go back many months after and you will find the stone lying a little farther down the valley than when you first saw it. Thus glaciers are formed and thus they slowly move. But what has all this to do with ice-bergs? We shall see.

As the great glaciers of the north, then, are continually moving down the valleys, of course their ends are pushed into the sea. These ends, or tongues, are often hundreds of feet thick. In some places they present a clear glittering wall to the sea of several hundreds of feet in height, with perhaps as much again lost to view down in the deep water. As the extremities of these tongues are shoved farther and farther out they chip off and float away. *These chips are ice-bergs!* I have already said that ice-bergs are sometimes miles in extent—like islands; that they sink seven or eight hundred feet below the surface, while their tops rise more than a hundred feet above it—like mountains. If these, then, are the "chips" of the Greenland glaciers what must the "old blocks" be?

Many a long and animated discussion the sailors had that winter in the cabin of the Hope on the subject of ice and ice-bergs!

When the dark nights drew on little or nothing could be done outside by our voyagers, and when the ice everywhere closed up, all the animals forsook them except polar bears, so that they ran short of fresh provisions. As months of dreary darkness passed away, the scurvy, that terrible disease, began to show itself among the men ; their bodies became less able to withstand the cold, and it was difficult for them at last to keep up their spirits. But they fought against their troubles bravely.

Captain Harvey knew well that when a man's spirits go he is not worth much. He therefore did his utmost to cheer and enliven those around him.

One day, for instance, he went on deck to breathe a mouthful of fresh air. It was about eleven in the forenoon, and the moon was shining brightly in the clear sky. The stars, too, and the aurora borealis, helped to make up for the total absence of the sun. The cold air cut like a knife against his face when he issued from the hatchway, and the cold nose of one of the dogs immediately touched his hand, as the animal gambolled round him with delight ; for the extreme severity of the weather began to tell on the poor dogs and made them draw more lovingly to their human companions.

"Ho ! hallo !" shouted the captain down the hatchway. "A fox chase ! a fox chase ! Tumble up all hands !"

The men were sitting at the time in a very dull and silent mood. They were much cast down, for as it had been cloudy weather for some weeks past, thick darkness had covered them night and day, so that they could not tell the one from the other, except by the help of their watches, which were kept carefully going. Their journals, also, were written up daily, otherwise they must certainly have got confused in their time altogether!

In consequence of this darkness the men were confined almost entirely to the cabin for a time. Those who had scurvy got worse; those who were well became gloomy. Even Pepper, who was a tremendous joker, held his tongue, and Joe Davis, who was a great singer, became silent, Jim Crofts was in his bunk "down" with the scurvy, and stout Sam Baker, who was a capital teller of stories, could not pluck up spirit enough to open his mouth. "In fact," as Mr. Dicey said, "they all had a most 'orrible fit o' the blues!" The captain and officers were in better health and spirits than the men, though they all fared alike at the same table and did the same kind of work, whatever that might chance to be. The officers, however, were constantly exerting themselves to cheer the men, and I have no doubt that this very effort of theirs was the means of doing good to themselves. "He that watereth others shall be watered," says the Word of God. I take this to mean—he that

does good to others shall get good to himself. So it certainly was with the officers of the Hope.

When the captain's shout reached the cabin Jim Crofts had just said :—"I'll tell 'ee what it is, messmates, if this here state o' things goes on much longer, I'll go out on the floes, walk up to the first polar bear I meet, and ask him to take his supper off me !"

There was no laugh at this, but Pepper remarked in a quiet way that "he needn't put himself to so much trouble, for he was such a pale-faced, disagreeable looking object, that no bear would eat him unless it was starving."

"Well, then, I'll offer myself to a starvin' bear, —to one that's a'most dead with hunger," retorted Jim, gloomily.

"What's that the cap'en is singin' out ?" said Davy Butts, who was mending a pair of canvas shoes.

The men roused themselves at once ; for the hope of anything new turning up excited them.

"Hallo ! ho !" roared the captain again, in a voice that might have started a dead walrus, "Tumble up there !—a fox chase ! I'll give my second-best fur-coat to the man that catches foxey !"

In one instant the whole crew were scrambling up the ladder. Even Jim Crofts, who was really ill, rolled out of his bunk and staggered on deck,

saying he would have a "go after foxey if he should die for it!"

The game of fox is simple. One man is chosen to be the fox. He runs off and the rest follow. They are bound to go wherever the fox leads. In this case it was arranged that the fox should run round the deck until he should be caught; then the man who caught him should become fox and continue running on with all the rest following until he, in turn, should be caught, and so on until the one who could run longest and fastest should break down all the rest. The warm fur-coat was a prize worth running for in such a cold climate, so the game began with spirit. Young Gregory offered to be fox first, and away they went with a yell. Mr. Mansell was a little lame and soon gave in. Mr. Dicey fell at the second round and was unable to recover distance. Gregory would certainly have gained the coat, for he was strong and had been a crack racer at school; but he did not want the coat, so allowed Sam Baker to catch him. Sam held on like a deer for a few minutes, and one after another the men dropped off as they were blown. Jim Crofts, poor fellow, made a gallant burst, but his limbs refused to help his spirit. He fell and was assisted below by the captain and replaced in his bunk, where, however, he felt the benefit of his efforts.

The chase was now kept up by Sam Baker, Joe

Davis, and Butts. These three were struggling on and panting loudly while their comrades danced about, clapped their mittened hands and shouted, "Now then, Sam !—go in and win, Joe !—Butts for ever !" and such like encouraging cries.

To the surprise of every one Davy Butts came off the winner, and for many a day after that enjoyed the warm coat which he said his long legs had gained for him.

This effort of the captain to cheer the men was very successful, so he resolved to follow it up with an attempt at private theatricals. Accordingly, the thing was proposed and heartily agreed to. Next day every one was busy making preparations. Tom Gregory agreed to write a short play. Sam Baker being the healthiest man on board was willing to act the part of an invalid old lady, and Jim Crofts consented to become a gay young doctor for that occasion.

Meanwhile the captain arranged a piece of real work, for he felt that the attempt to keep up the spirits alone would not do. They had been for a long time living on salt provisions. Nothing could restore the crew but fresh meat—yet fresh meat was not to be had. The walrus and deer were gone, and although foxes and bears were still around them they had failed in all their attempts to shoot or trap any of these animals. A visit to the Eskimo camp, therefore (if such a camp really

existed) became necessary; so, while the theatricals were in preparation, a small sledge was rigged up, Gregory and Sam Baker were chosen to go with him; the dogs were harnessed, and, on a fine starry forenoon, away they went to the south at full gallop with three hearty cheers from the crew of the brig, who were left in charge of the first mate.

The journey thus undertaken was one full of risk. It was not known how far distant the natives might be, or where they were likely to be found. The weather was intensely cold. Only a small quantity of preserved meat could be taken—for the rest, they trusted in some measure to their guns. But the captain's great hope was to reach the Eskimo village in a day or two at the farthest. If he should fail to do so, the prospect of himself and his crew surviving the remainder of the long winter was, he felt, very gloomy indeed.

Success attended this expedition at the very beginning. They had only been eight hours out when they met a bear sitting on its haunches behind a hummock. "Hallo! look out!" cried Gregory on catching sight of him. "Fire, lads," said the captain, "I'm not quite ready." Gregory fired and the bear staggered. Baker then fired and it fell!

This was a blessing which filled their hearts so full of thankfulness that they actually shook hands with each other and then gave vent to three hearty

cheers. Their next thoughts were given to their comrades in the Hope.

"You and Baker will camp here, Tom," said the captain, "and I will return to the brig with a sledge-load of the meat. When I've put it aboard I'll come straight back to you. We'll keep a ham for ourselves, of course. Now, then, to work."

To work the three men went. A hind leg of the bear was cut off, the rest was lashed firmly on the sledge, and the dogs enjoyed a feed while this was being done. Then the captain cracked his whip. "Good-bye, lads," "Good-bye, captain," and away he and the dogs and sledge went, and were soon lost to view among the hummocks of the frozen sea.

CHAPTER IX.

A VISIT TO THE ESKIMOS—WONDERFUL DOINGS—A MYSTERY.

THE proceedings of this sledge-party were so interesting that I give them in the words of Tom Gregory's journal :—

"*Sunday.*—We have indeed cause to rejoice and to thank God for His mercies this morning. Last night we shot a bear, and the captain is away with the carcase of it to our poor scurvy-smitten friends in the Hope. This Sunday will be a real day of rest for me and Sam Baker, though our resting-place is a very queer one. After the captain left us, we looked about for a convenient place to encamp, and only a few yards from the spot where we killed the bear we found the ruins of an old Eskimo hut made partly of stones partly of ice. We set to work to patch it up with snow, and made it perfectly air-tight in about two hours.

"Into this we carried our bear-skins and things, spread them on the snowy floor, put a lump of bear's fat into our tin travelling lamp, and pre-

pared supper. We were not particular about the cookery. We cut a couple of huge slices off our bear's ham, half roasted them over the lamp and began. It was cut, roast, and come again, for the next hour and a half. I positively never knew what hunger was until I came to this savage country! And I certainly never before had any idea of how much I could eat at one sitting!

"This hearty supper was washed down with a swig of melted snow-water. We had some coffee with us but were too tired to infuse it. Then we blocked up the door with snow, rolled our bear-skins round us, and were sound asleep in five minutes.

"Lucky for us that we were so careful to stop up every hole with snow, for, during the night, the wind rose and it became so intensely cold that Baker and I could scarcely keep each other warm enough to sleep, tired though we were. At this moment my fingers are so stiff that they will hardly hold the pencil with which I write, and the gale is blowing so furiously outside that we dare not open the door. This door, by the way, is only a hole big enough to creep through. The captain cannot travel to-day. He knows we are safe, so I will not expect him. I have brought my small Testament with me. It has hitherto been my constant travelling companion. I am thus provided with mental food. But in truth I shall

not want much of that for the next twelve hours. Rest! rest! rest! is what we require. No one can imagine how a man can enjoy rest, after he has been been for many months exposed to constant, exhausting, heart-breaking toil, with the thermometer *always* below zero, and with nothing but salt food to keep him alive.

"*Tuesday night.*—Here we are at last—among the Eskimos! and what a queer set they are to be sure. All fat and fur! They look as broad as they are long. They wear short fox and seal-skin coats or shirts with hoods to them; no trousers, but long boots that come up and meet the coats. Women, men, and babies, all dressed alike, or nearly so. The only difference is, that the women's boots are longer and wider than those of the men. But I forget—yes, there is one other difference; the women have *tails* to their coats; the men have none! Real tails—not like the broad skirts of our dress-coats, but long narrow tails something like the tail of a cow with a broadish flap at the end of it. This they evidently look upon as a handsome ornament, for I observe that, when they go off on a journey, each woman buttons her tail up to her waist to keep it out of the way, and when she returns she unbuttons it and comes into camp with her tail flowing gracefully behind her!

"We had a terrible journey of it down here.

The captain returned to us on Monday morning early, and the next two days we spent struggling over the hummocks and out upon the floes. It was so cold that the wind cut into our very marrow. We have all had our faces frozen, more or less, but not badly. Baker will have an ugly spot on the end of his nose for some weeks to come. It is getting black now, and as the nose itself is bright red and much swelled his appearance is not improved. I foolishly tried to eat a little snow yesterday morning, and the consequence is that my lips are sore and bloody. On Monday afternoon the dogs and sledge went head over heels into a deep rut in the ice, and it cost us two hours to get them out again. Luckily no damage was done, although the captain was on the sledge at the time.

"We had almost despaired of finding the village when we came upon a sledge track that led us straight up to it. I shall never forget the beauty of the scene on our arrival. The sky was lighted up with the most beautiful aurora I have yet seen in these regions. Stars spangled the sky in millions. Great ice-bergs rose in wild confusion in the distance, and all along the shore for a few hundred yards were clusters of snow-huts. They looked exactly like big bee-hives. I have seen many a strange house, but the strangest of all is certainly a house of snow! To-day I was fortunate

enough to see one built. It was done very neatly. The hard snow was cut into slabs with a wooden knife. These were piled one above another in regular order and cemented with snow—as bricks are with lime. The form of the wall was circular, and the slabs were so shaped that they sloped inwards, thus forming a dome, or large bee-hive, with a key-stone slab in the top to keep all firm. A hole was then cut in the side for a door—just large enough to admit of a man creeping through. In front of this door a porch or passage of snow was built. The only way of getting into the hut is by creeping on hands and knees along the passage. A hole was also cut in the roof, into which was inserted a piece of clear ice to serve for a window.

"The natives received us with wild surprise, and I found my old friends the walrus hunters among them. They were remarkably friendly. One stout middle-aged fellow invited us to his hut. I am now seated in it beside the Eskimo's wife, who would be a good-looking woman if she were not so fat, dirty, and oily! But we cannot expect people living in this fashion and in such a country to be very clean. Although the hut is white outside it is by no means white inside. They cook all their food over an oil lamp which also serves to heat the place; and it is wonderful how warm a house of snow becomes. The cold outside is so great as to prevent the walls melting

inside. Besides Myouk, our host, and his wife, there are two of the man's sisters, two lads, two girls, and a baby in the hut. Also six dogs. The whole of them—men, women, children, and dogs, are as fat as they can be, for they have been successful in walrus-hunting of late. No wonder that the perspiration is running down my face! The natives feel the heat too, for they are all half naked —the baby entirely so; but they seem to like it!

"What a chattering to be sure! I am trying to take notes, and Myouk's wife is staring at me with her mouth wide open. It is a wonder she can open her eyes at all her cheeks are so fat. The captain is trying, by the language of signs, to get our host to understand that we are much in want of fresh meat. Sam Baker is making himself agreeable to the young people, and the plan he has hit upon to amuse them is to show them his watch, and let them hear it tick. Truly, I have seldom seen a happier family group than this Eskimo household under their snowy roof!

"There is to be a grand walrus-hunt to-morrow. We shall accompany them and see whether our endurance on a long march and our powers with the rifle cannot impress them with some respect for us. At present they have not much. They seem to think us a pale-faced set of helpless creatures.

"*Wednesday night.*—We have just returned from the hunt; and a tremendous hunt it was!

Six walrus and two bears have been killed, and the whole village is wild with delight. Cooking is going on in every hut. But they have no patience. Nearly every one is munching away at a lump of raw walrus flesh. All their faces are more or less greasy and bloody. Even Myouk's baby—though not able to speak—is choking itself with a long stringy piece of blubber. The dogs, too, have got their share. An Eskimo's chief happiness seems to be in eating, and I cannot wonder at it, for the poor creatures have hard work to get food, and they are often on the verge of starvation.

"What a dirty set they are! I shall never forget the appearance of Myouk's hut when we entered it this evening after returning from the hunt. The man's wife had made the wick of her stone lamp as long as possible in order to cook a large supper. There were fifteen people crowded together in this hive of snow, and the heat had induced them to throw off the greater part of their clothing. Every hand had a greasy lump of bear or walrus meat in it; every mouth was in full occupation, and every fat face, of man, woman, and child, was beaming with delight, and covered with dirt and oil!

"The captain and I looked at each other and smiled as we entered, and Sam Baker laughed outright. This set all the natives laughing too.

We did not much relish the idea of supping and sleeping in such a place—but necessity has no law. We were hungry as hawks, desperately tired, and the temperature outside is 35° below zero. The first duty of the night is now over. We have supped. The natives will continue to eat the greater part of the night. They eat till they fall asleep; if they chance to awake they eat again. Half of them are asleep now—and snoring. The other half are eating slowly, for they are nearly full. The heat and smell are awful! I am perspiring at every pore. We have taken off as much of our clothes as decency will permit. Sam has on a pair of trousers—nothing more. I am in the same state! There is little room, as may be supposed. We have to lie huddled up as we best can, and a strange sight we are as the red light of the flaring lamp falls on us. At this moment Myouk's wife is cutting a fresh steak. The youngest boy is sound asleep with a lump of fat between his teeth. The captain is also sound, with his legs sprawling over the limbs of half a dozen slumbering natives. He is using the baby as a pillow. It is curious to think that these poor creatures always live in this way. Sometimes feasting, sometimes starving. Freezing out on the floes; stewing under their roofs of snow. Usually fat; for the most part jolly; always dirty!

"It is sad, too, to think of this; for it is a low condition for human beings to live in. They seem to have no religion at all. Certainly none that is worthy of the name. I am much puzzled when I think of the difficulties in the way of introducing Christianity among these northern Eskimos. No missionary could exist in such a climate and in such circumstances. It is with the utmost difficulty that hardy seamen can hold out for a year, even with a ship-load of comforts. But this is too deep a subject to write about to-night! I can't keep my eyes open. I will, therefore, close my note-book and lie down to sleep—perhaps to be suffocated! I hope not!"

Accordingly, our young friend the doctor did lie down to sleep, and got through the night without being suffocated. Indeed he slept so soundly that Captain Harvey could scarcely rouse him next morning.

"Hallo! Tom! Tom!" cried he loudly, at the same time shaking his nephew's arm violently.

"Ay! eh!" and a tremendous yawn from Tom. "What now, uncle. Time to rise, is it? where am I?"

"Time to rise," replied the captain, laughing, "I should think it is. Why, it's past eleven in the forenoon. The stars are bright and the sky clear. The aurora, too, is shining. Come, get up! The natives are all outside watching Sam

while he packs our sledge. The ladies are going about the camp whisking their tails and whacking their babies in great glee, for it is not every day they enjoy such a feed as they had last night."

In half an hour they were ready. The whole village turned out to see them start. Myouk, with his wife Oomia, and the baby, and his son Meetek, accompanied them to Refuge Harbour. Oomia's baby was part of herself. She could not move without it! It was always naked, but, being stuffed into the hood of its mother's fur coat, it seemed always warm.

"I say, Tom, what's that up in the sky?" said Captain Harvey suddenly, after they had been driving for a couple of hours. "It's the strangest looking thing I ever did see."

"So it is," replied Gregory, gazing intently at the object in question, which seemed high up in the air. "It can't be a comet because it gives no light."

"Perhaps not, but it has got a tail, that's a fact," said Baker in a voice of surprise. "Who ever heard of a dark, four-cornered star with a tail? If I had seen it in daylight, and in Merry England, I would have said it was a kite!"

"A kite! nonsense," cried the captain, "what in the world can it be?"

Reader, you shall find that out in the next chapter.

Esquimaux Village.

CHAPTER X.

THE TALE OF A KITE—A GREAT BEAR-FIGHT.

WHEN Mr. Mansell was left in charge of the brig, a heavy weight lay on his heart, and he could by no means take part in the preparations for the theatricals which occupied the rest of the crew. He felt that life or death depended on the success of the captain in his search for fresh meat. Already most of the men were ill with scurvy, and some of them were alarmingly low. Nothing could save them but fresh meat, and when the first mate thought of the difficulties and dangers of a journey on the floes in such weather, and the uncertainty of the Eskimos being discovered, his heart misgave him.

About an hour after the departure of Captain Harvey on the Monday morning he took Davy Butts aside.

"Davy," said he, "you've been at work on these kites a long time. Are they nearly finished?"

"Quite finished, sir," answered Butts

"Then get them up, for there is a good breeze. I shall try them on our small sledges. It will at least stir up and amuse the men."

Ten minutes after this, the crew were summoned on deck to witness an experiment. A small dog sledge lay on the hard snow beside the vessel, and near to this Davy Butts and Mr. Dicey were holding on to a stout line, at the end of which an enormous kite was pulling.

This kite was square in shape, made of the thickest brown paper, and nearly six feet across. That its power was great was evident from the difficulty with which the two men held it. The end of the line was fastened to the sledge.

"Now, boys, ease off line till it is taut, and then wait for the word," said Davy Butts, jumping on to the sledge. "Now—Let go!"

Away went the sledge over the hard snow at the rate of three miles an hour, which soon increased to double that rate. Davy cheered and waved his arms. The men gave one loud "hurrah" of surprise and delight and set off in mad pursuit. They were soon left behind. "Hold on, Davy!" "Good-bye, Butts." "Look out, mind the ridge!"

The last warning was needful. The sledge was rushing furiously towards a long ridge of ice which rose in a sharp slope to a height of three feet, and descended on the other side to an equal

depth, but without any slope. Davy saw his danger, but he did not dare to put out foot or hand to check his progress. Even if he had it would have been of no use. Up the slope he went as a sea-gull skims over a wave; for one moment he was in the air—the next, he came down with a crash that nearly dislocated all his joints, and his teeth came together with a loud snap. (By good fortune his tongue was not between them!) The sledge was a strong one, and the thing was done so quickly and neatly that it did not upset. But now a large and rugged hummock lay right before him. To go against that would have been certain death, so Davy made up his mind at once and jumped off at the smoothest part of the floe he could find. The lightened sledge sprang away like a rocket and was brought up with a sudden jerk by the hummock.

Of course the line broke, and the kite commenced to descend. It twirled and circled violently round and at last went crash into an ice-berg, where it was broken to pieces!

"Not so bad for a beginning," said Mansell, as poor Davy came back, looking very crest-fallen. "Now, Butts, come below. You have proved that the thing will do. Mr. Dicey, get yourself ready for a trip over the ice. Let three men prepare to accompany you. I shall send you off to-morrow."

Dicey, much surprised, went off to obey these orders; and Mansell with the assistance of Butts fitted the second kite for the intended journey. He made a rough guess at the strength of its pull, and loaded the sledge accordingly. Two tail ropes were fastened to the last bar of the sledge for the men to hold on by and check its speed. A sort of anchor was made by which it could be stopped at any moment, and two stout poles with iron claws at the end of them were prepared for scraping over the snow and checking the pace.

Next day all was ready. A trial was made, and the thing found to work admirably. The trial trip over they bade their comrades farewell, and away they went due south, in the direction where the native village was supposed to be.

It was this remarkable tow-horse that had filled Captain Harvey and his companions with so much surprise. The appearance of the sledge immediately after with a shout and a cheer from Dicey and the men explained the mystery.

Being so near the Eskimo camp they at once returned to it, in order to allow the newly arrived party to rest, as well as to load their sledge with as much fresh meat as it could carry; for which supplies the captain took care to pay the natives with a few knives and a large quantity of hoop-iron—articles that were much more valuable to them than gold. As the wind could not be made

to turn about to suit their convenience, the kite was brought down and given to Davy to carry, and a team of native dogs were harnessed to the sledge instead. On the following day the united party set out on their return to the brig, which they reached in safety.

Tom Gregory's account of the Eskimos who accompanied them to their wooden home is amusing. His journal runs thus—

"The amazement of our visitors is very great. Myouk, his wife and baby, and his son Meetek, are now our guests. When they first came in sight of the brig they uttered a wild shout—the men did so, at least—and tossed their arms and opened their eyes and mouths. They have never shut them since. They go all round the vessel staring and gaping with amazement. We have given them a number of useful presents, and intend to send them home loaded with gifts for their friends. It is necessary to make a good impression on them. Our lives depend very much on the friendship of these poor people. We find that they are terrible thieves. A number of knives and a hatchet were missed—they were found hidden in Myouk's sledge. We tried to prevail on Oomia to sell her long boots. To our surprise she was quite willing to part with *one*, but nothing would induce her to give up the *other*. One of the men observed her steal a knife out of

CHAPTER XI.

CHRISTMAS TIME—DEATH—RETURNING LIGHT AND HOPE—DISASTERS AND FINAL DELIVERANCE.

CHRISTMAS came at last, but with it came no bright sun to remind those ice-bound men of our Saviour—the "Sun of Righteousness"—whose birth the day commemorated. It was even darker than usual in Refuge Harbour on that Christmas-day. It was so dark at noon that one could not see any object more than a few yards distant from the eyes. A gale of wind from the nor'-west blew the snow-drift in whirling ghost-like clouds round the Hope, so that it was impossible to face it for a moment. So intense was the cold that it felt like sheets of fire being driven against the face! Truly it was a day well fitted to have depressed the heartiest of men. But man is a wonderful creature, not easy to comprehend! The very things that ought to have cast down the spirits of the men of the Hope, were the things that helped to cheer them.

About this time, as I have said, the health of

"Half an hour later, while we were dragging the carcase towards the brig, we came unexpectedly upon another bear. Myouk and Meetek at once grasped their lances and ran forward to attack him. I now resolved to play them a trick. Besides my rifle I carried a large horse-pistol in my belt. This I examined, and, finding it all right, I followed close at the heels of the Eskimos. Bruin got up on his hind legs as before, and the two men advanced close to him. I stopped when within thirty yards, cocked my rifle and stood ready. Myouk was just going to thrust with his lance when—*bang!* went my rifle. The bear fell. It was shot right through the heart, but it struggled for some time after that. The natives seemed inclined to run away when they heard the shot, but I laughed and made signs of friendship. Then I went close up and shot the bear through the head with my pistol. This affair has filled my savage companions with deep respect for me!"

These two bears were the last they obtained that winter; but as a good supply of meat had been obtained from the Eskimos they were relieved from anxiety for the time, and the health of the men began to improve a little. But this happy state of things did not last till spring. These sorely tried men were destined to endure much suffering before the light of the sun came back to cheer their drooping spirits.

more reason why they should make the most of each other! Besides, they were wrong in their last idea about friends, for it chanced, on that very day, that Myouk the Eskimo paid them a visit—quite ignorant of its being Christmas of course. Meetek was with him, and so was Oomia, and so was the baby—that remarkably fat, oily, naked baby, that seemed rather to enjoy the cold than otherwise!

They had a plum-pudding that day. Butts said it was almost as big as the head of a walrus. They had also a roast of beef—walrus beef of course—and first-rate it was. But before dinner the captain made them go through their usual morning work of cleaning, airing, making beds, posting journals, noting temperatures, opening the fire-hole, and redding up. For the captain was a great believer in the value of discipline. He knew that no man enjoys himself so much as he who has got through his work early—who has done his duty. It did not take them long, and when it was done, the captain said, "Now, boys, we must be jolly to-day. As we can't get out we must take some exercise indoors. We shall need extra appetite to make away with that plum-pudding."

So, at it they went! Every sort of game or feat of strength known to sailors was played, or attempted. It was in the middle of all this that

Myouk and his family arrived, so they were compelled to join. Even the fat baby was put into a blanket and swung round the cabin by Jim Croft, to the horror of its mother, who seemed to think it would be killed, and to the delight of its father, who didn't seem to care whether it was killed or not.

Then came the dinner. What a scene that was, to be sure! It would take a whole book to describe all that was said and done that day. The Eskimos ate till they could hardly stand—that was their usual custom. Then they lay down and went to sleep—that was their usual custom too. The rest ate as heartily, poor fellows, as was possible for men not yet quite recovered from scurvy. They had no wine, but they had excellent coffee, and with this they drank to absent friends, sweethearts and wives, and many other toasts, the mere mention of which raised such strong home-feelings in their breasts that some of them almost choked in the attempt to cheer. Then came songs and stories—all of them old, very old indeed—but they came out on this occasion as good as new. The great event of the evening, however, was a fancy ball, in which our friends Butts, Baker, Gregory, and Pepper distinguished themselves. They had a fiddle, and Dawkins the steward could play it. He knew nothing but Scotch reels; but what could have been better? They could

all dance, or, if they could not, they all tried. Myouk and Meetek were made to join and they capered as gracefully as polar bears, which animals they strongly resembled in their hairy garments. Late in the evening came supper. It was just a repetition of dinner, with the remains of the pudding fried in bear's grease.

Thus passed Christmas Day; much in the same way passed New Year's Day. Then the men settled down to their old style of life; but the time hung so heavy on their hands that their spirits began to sink again. The long darkness became intolerable and the fresh meat began to fail. Everything with life seemed to have forsaken the place. The captain made another trip to the Eskimo village and found the huts empty —the whole race had flown, he knew not whither! The private theatricals were at first very successful; but by degrees they lost their interest and were given up. Then a school was started and Gregory became head master. Writing and arithmetic were the only branches taught. Some of the men were much in need of instruction, and all of them took to the school with energy and much delight. It lasted longer than the theatricals did. As time wore on the fresh meat was finished, scurvy became worse; and it was as much as the men who were not quite knocked down could do to attend to those who were. Day after day Tom

Gregory and Sam Baker went out to hunt and each day returned empty-handed. Sometimes an Arctic hare or a fox was got ; but not often. At last rats were eaten as food. These creatures swarmed in the hold of the brig. They were caught in traps and shot with a bow and a blunt-headed arrow. But few of the men would eat them. The captain urged them to do so in vain. Those who did eat kept in better health than those who did not.

At last death came. Mr. Mansell sank beneath the terrible disease and was buried on the island. No grave could be dug in that hard frozen soil. The burial service was read by his sorrowing comrades over his body, which was frozen quite hard before they reached the grave, and then they laid it in a tomb of ice.

Time hung heavier than ever after that. Death is at all times a terrible visitant, but in such a place and in such circumstances it was tenfold more awful than usual. The blank in so small a band was a great one. It would perhaps have depressed them more than it did had their own situation been less desperate. But they had too fierce a battle to fight with disease, and the midnight gloom, and the bitter frost, to give way to much feeling about him who was gone.

Thus the long winter passed heavily away.

The sun came back at last, and when he came his beams shone upon a pale, shattered and heart-

weary band of men. But with his cheering light came also *hope*, and health soon followed in his train. Let young Gregory's journal tell the rest of our story, little of which now remains to be told.

"*February* 21*st.*—I have to record, with joy and gratitude, that the sun shone on the peaks of the ice-bergs to-day. The first time it has done so since October last. By the end of this month we shall have his rays on deck. I climbed to the top of a berg and actually bathed in sunshine this forenoon! We are all quite excited by the event, some of us even look jolly. Ah! what miserable faces my comrades have! so pale, so thin! We are all as weak as water. The captain and I are the strongest. Baker is also pretty well. Crofts and Davis are almost useless, the rest are quite helpless. The captain cooks, Baker and I hunt, Crofts and Davis attend to the sick. Another month of darkness would have killed the half of us.

"*March* 10*th.*—I shot a bear to-day. It did my heart good to see the faces of the men when I brought them the news and a piece of the flesh! The cold is not quite so intense now. Our coldest day this year has been the 17th of January. The glass stood at 67° below zero on that morning. What a winter we have had! I shudder when I think of it. But there is more

cause to be anxious about what yet lies before us. A single bear will not last long. Many weeks must pass before we are free. In June we hope to be released from our ice-prison. Fresh meat we shall then have in abundance. With it strength will return, and then, if God permits, we shall attempt to continue our voyage northward. The captain is confident on the point of open water round the Pole. The men are game for anything in spite of their sad condition."

Thus wrote Gregory at that date. Many weeks later we find him writing as follows :—

"*June 15th.*—Free at last! The ice has been breaking up out at sea for some time past. It gave way in Refuge Harbour yesterday and we warped out in the night. Everything is ready to push north again. We have been feeding heartily for many weeks on walrus, seals, wild-fowl, and last, but not least, on some grasses which make bad greens, but they have put scurvy to flight. All the men are well and strong and fit for hard work—though nothing like what they were when we first came here. Could it be otherwise? There are some of us who will carry the marks of this winter to our graves. The bright beautiful sunlight shines now, all day and all night, cheering our hearts and inspiring hope.

"*June 16th.*—All is lost! How little we know what a day may bring forth! Our good

little brig is gone, and we are here on the ice without a thing in the world except the clothes on our backs. I have saved my note-book, which chanced to be in my breast-pocket when the nip took place. How awfully sudden it was! We now appreciate the wise forethought of Captain Harvey in sending the large boat to Forlorn-Hope Bay. This boat is our last and only hope. We shall have to walk forty miles before we reach it.

"Our brig went down at three o'clock this afternoon. We had warped out into the floes to catch a light breeze that was blowing outside. For some time we held on steadily to the northward, but had not got out of sight of our winter quarters when a stream of ice set down upon us and closed in all round. At first we thought nothing of this, having escaped so many dangers of the kind last autumn, but by degrees the pressure increased alarmingly. We were jammed against a great ice-field which was still fast to the shore. In a few moments the sides of our little vessel began to creak and groan loudly. The men laboured like tigers at the ice-poles, but in vain. We heard a loud report in the cabin. No one knows what it was, but I suppose it must have been the breaking of a large bolt. At any rate it was followed by a series of crashes and reports that left no doubt in our minds as to what was going on. The ice was cracking the brig as if she had been a nut-shell.

"Save yourselves, lads!" cried the captain. One or two of the men made a rush to the hatchway intending to run below and save some of their things. I ran to the cabin-ladder in the hope of saving our log-book and journals, but we all started back in horror, for the deck at that moment burst open almost under our feet. I cast one glance down through the opening into the hold. That glance was sufficient. The massive timbers and beams were being crushed together, doubled up, split, and shivered, as if they had been rotten straws! In another moment I was on the ice, where the whole crew were assembled looking on at the work of destruction in solemn silence.

"After bursting in the vessel's sides the ice eased off and she at once began to settle down. We could hear the water rushing furiously into the hold. Ten minutes later, she was gone! Thus end our hopes of farther discovery, and we are now left to fight our way in an open boat to the settlements on the south coast of Greenland. We have little time to think. Prompt action must be our watchword now if we would escape from this world of ice.

"*July 20th.*—I have not entered a line in this journal since our vessel was lost. Our work has been so severe and our sufferings so great that I have had no heart for writing. Our walk to the place where we left the boat was a hard one, but

we were cheered by finding the boat all safe and the provisions and stores just as we left them. There was not enough to last out the voyage, but we had guns and powder. It is in vain to attempt to describe the events of the last few weeks. Constant and hard and cold work—at the oars, with the ice-poles—warping, hauling, and shoving. Beset by ice ; driving before storms ; detained by thick fogs ; often wet to the skin ; always tired, almost starving—such has been our fate since that sad day when our brig went down. And yet I don't think there is one of our party who would not turn about on the spot and renew our voyage of discovery if he only got a chance of going in a well-appointed vessel. As it is, we must push on. Home ! home ! is our cry now.

"*August* 1*st*.—We are now in clover, after having been reduced to think of roasting our shoes for breakfast. For three days last week we ate nothing at all. Our powder has been expended for some weeks past. On Monday we finished our last morsel of the gull that Pepper managed to bring down with a stone. Tuesday was a terrible day. The agony of hunger was worse than I had expected it to be. Nevertheless, we tried hard to cheer each other, as we laboured at the oars. Our only hope was to fall in with natives. Signs of them were seen everywhere, and we expected to hear their shouts at every point of land we doubled.

The captain suggested that we should try *shoe-soup* on Wednesday morning! He was more than half in earnest, but spoke as if he were jesting. Pepper cocked his ears as if there was some hope still of work for him to do in his own line. Jim Crofts pulled off his shoe, and, looking at it earnestly, wondered if the sole would make a very tough chop. We all laughed, but I cannot say that the laugh sounded hearty. On the Thursday I began to feel weak, but the pangs of hunger were not so bad. Our eyes seemed very large and wolfish. I could not help shuddering when I thought of the terrible things that men have done when reduced to this state.

"That evening as we rounded a point we saw an Eskimo boy high on a cliff with a net in his hand. He did not see us for some time, and we were so excited that we stopped rowing to watch him in breathless silence. Thousands of birds were flying round his head among the cliffs. How often we had tried to kill some of these with sticks and stones, in vain! The net he held was a round one with a long handle. Suddenly he made a dashing sweep with it and caught two of the birds as they passed! We now saw that a number of dead birds lay at his feet. In one moment our boat was ashore and we scrambled up the cliffs in eager haste. The boy fled in terror, but before he was well out of sight every man was

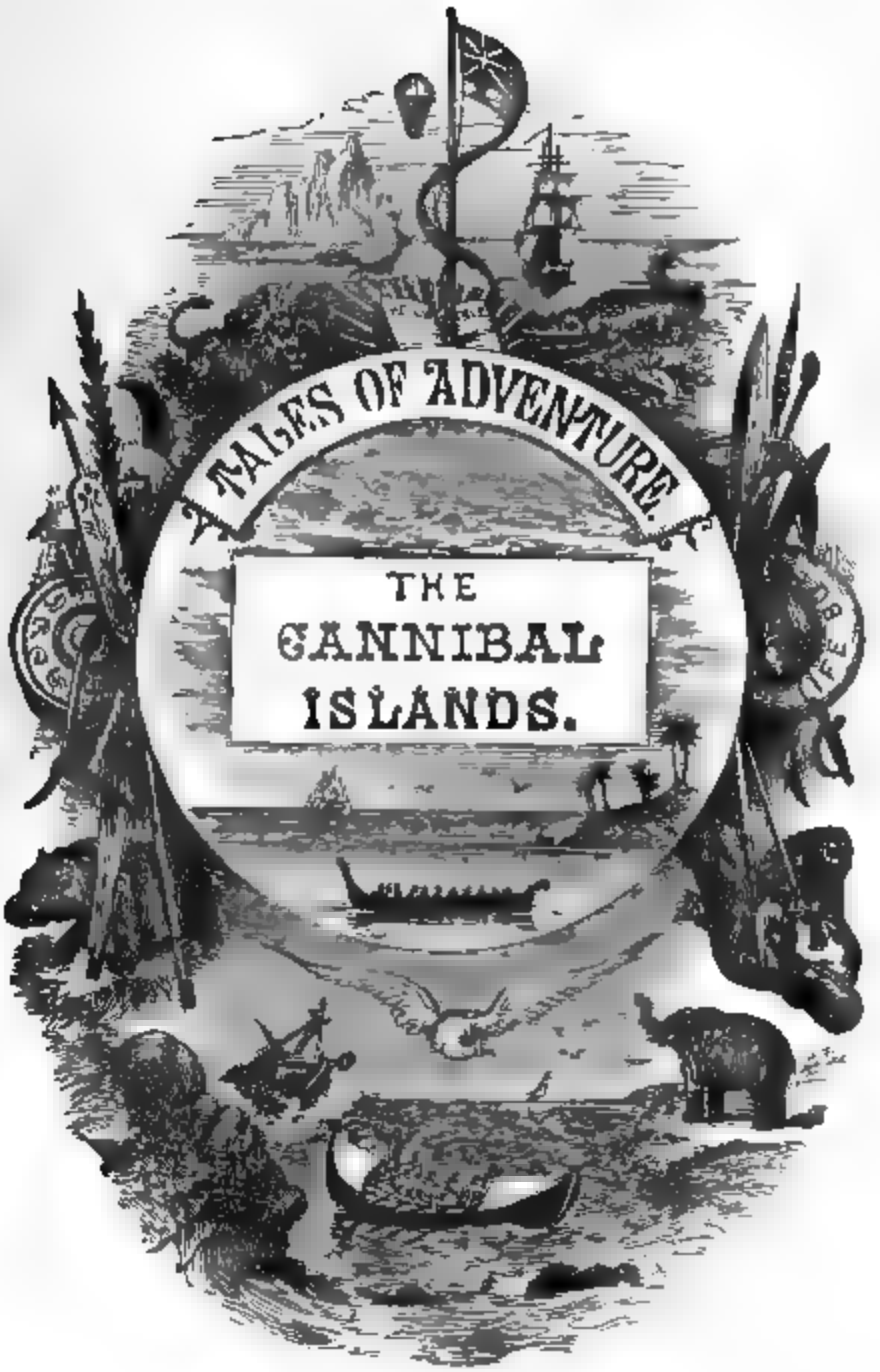
seated on a ledge of rock with a bird at his mouth sucking the blood! Hunger like ours despises cookery! It was fortunate that there were not many birds, else we should have done ourselves harm by eating too much. I have eaten many a good meal in my life, but never one so sweet, or for which I was so thankful, as that meal of raw birds devoured on the cliffs of Greenland!

"That night we reached the Eskimo village, where we now lie. We find that it is only two days' journey from this place to the Danish settlements. There we mean to get on board the first ship that is bound for Europe—no matter what port she sails for. Meanwhile we rest our weary limbs in peace, for our dangers are past and—thanks be to God—we are saved."

* * * *

Reader, my tale is told. A little book cannot be made to contain a long story, else would I have narrated many more of the strange and interesting events that befel our adventurers during that voyage. But enough has been written to give some idea of what is done and suffered by those daring men who attempt to navigate the Polar seas.

New Zealand Canoe.


TALES OF ADVENTURE.
THE
CANNIBAL
ISLANDS.

THE CANNIBAL ISLANDS

OR

CAPTAIN COOK'S ADVENTURES IN THE SOUTH SEAS.

CHAPTER I.

A HERO WHO ROSE FROM THE RANKS.

MORE than a hundred years ago, there lived a man who dwelt in a mud cottage in the county of York; his name was Cook. He was a poor, honest labourer—a farm servant. This man was the father of that James Cook who lived to be a captain in the British Navy, and who, before he was killed, became one of the best and greatest navigators that ever spread his sails to the breeze and crossed the stormy sea.

Captain Cook was a true hero. His name is known throughout the whole world wherever books are read. He was born in the lowest condition of life, and raised himself to the

highest point of fame. He was a self-taught man too. No large sums of money or long years of time were spent upon his schooling. No college education made him what he was. An old woman taught him his letters, but he was not sent to school till he was thirteen years of age. He remained only four years at the village school, where he learned a little writing and a little figuring. This was all he had to start with. The knowledge which he afterwards acquired; the great deeds that he performed, and the wonderful discoveries that he made, were all owing to the sound brain, the patient persevering spirit, the modest practical nature, and the good stout arm with which the Almighty had blessed him. It is the glory of England that many of her greatest men have risen from the ranks of those sons of toil who earn their daily bread in the sweat of their brow. Among all who have thus risen, few stand so high as Captain Cook.

Many bold things he did, many strange regions he visited, in his voyages round the world, the records of which fill bulky volumes. In this little book we shall confine our attention to some of the interesting discoveries that were made by him among the romantic islands of the south Pacific,—islands which are so beautiful that they have been aptly styled "gems of

ocean," but which, nevertheless, are inhabited by savage races so thoroughly addicted to the terrible practice of eating human flesh, that we have thought fit to adopt the other and not less appropriate name of the Cannibal Islands.

Before proceeding with the narrative, let us glance briefly at the early career of Captain James Cook. He was born in 1728. After receiving the very slight education already referred to, he was bound apprentice to a shopkeeper. But the roving spirit within him soon caused him to break away from an occupation so uncongenial. He passed little more than a year behind the counter, and then, in 1746, went to sea.

Young Cook's first voyages were in connexion with the coasting trade. He began his career in a collier trading between London and Newcastle. In a very short time it became evident that he would soon be a rising man. Promotion came rapidly. Little more than three years after the expiry of his apprenticeship he became mate of the *Friendship*, but, a few years later, he turned a longing eye on the navy—"having," as he himself said, "a mind to try his fortune that way." In the year 1755 he entered the King's service on board the *Eagle*, a sixty gun ship, commanded by Sir Hugh Palliser. This officer was one of Cook's warmest friends through life.

In the navy the young sailor displayed the same steady thorough-going character that had won him advancement in the coasting trade. The secret of his good fortune (if secret it may be called) was his untiring perseverance and energy in the pursuit of one object at one time. His attention was never divided. He seemed to have the power of giving his whole soul to the work in hand, whatever that might be, without troubling himself about the future. Whatever his hand found to do he did it with all his might. The consequence was that he became a first-rate man. His superiors soon found that out. He did not require to boast or push himself forward. His *work* spoke for him, and the result was that he was promoted from the fore-castle to the quarter-deck and became a master on board the *Mercury* when he was about thirty years of age.

About this time he went with the fleet to the gulf of St. Lawrence and took part in the war then raging between the British and French in Canada. Winter in that region is long and bitterly cold. The gulfs and rivers there are at that season covered with thick ice; ships cannot move about, and war cannot be carried on. Thus the fleet was for a long period inactive. Cook took advantage of this leisure time to study mathematics and astronomy, and, although he little thought it, was thus fitting

himself for the great work of discovery which he afterwards undertook with signal success.

In this expedition to Canada, Cook distinguished himself greatly—especially in his surveys of the gulf of St. Lawrence, and in piloting the fleet safely through the dangerous shoals and rocks of that inland sea. So careful and correct was he in all that he did, that men in power and in high places began to take special notice of him, and, finally, when in the year 1767, an expedition of importance was about to be sent to the southern seas for scientific purposes, Cook was chosen to command it.

This was indeed a high honour, for the success of that expedition depended on the man who should be placed at its head. In order to mark the importance of the command, and at the same time invest the commander with proper authority, Cook was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in the Royal Navy. He had long been a gentleman in heart and conduct; he was now raised to the social position of one by the King's commission.

From this point in his career, Cook's history as a great navigator and discoverer began. We shall now follow him more closely in his brilliant course over the world of waters. He was about forty years of age at this time; modest and unassuming in manners and ap-

pearance ; upwards of six feet high, and good-looking, with quick piercing eyes and brown hair, which latter he wore, according to the fashion of the time, tied behind in a pig tail. It was not until the end of his first voyage that he was promoted to the rank of captain.

CHAPTER II.

SHOWS WHAT MEN WILL DO AND DARE IN THE CAUSE OF SCIENCE.

MEN who study the stars tell us strange and wonderful things—things that the unlearned find it hard to understand, and harder still to believe, yet things that we are now as sure of, as we are of the fact that two and two make four!

There was a time when men said that the sun moved round the earth, and very natural it was in men to say so, for, to the eye of sense, it looks as if this were really the case. But those who study the stars have found out that the earth moves round the sun—a discovery which has been of the greatest importance to mankind—though the importance thereof cannot be fully understood except by scientific men.

Among other difficult things, these astronomers have attempted to measure the distance of the sun, moon, and stars, from our earth. Moreover, they have tried to ascertain the exact size of these celestial lights, and they

have, to a considerable extent, been successful in their efforts. By their complicated calculations, the men who study the stars can tell the exact day, hour, and minute, when certain events will happen, such as an eclipse of the sun or of the moon.

Now, about the year 1768 the attention of the scientific world was eagerly turned to an event which was to take place in the following year. This was the passage of the planet Venus across the face of the sun. Astronomers term this the *transit of Venus.* It happens very seldom, and occurred last in 1769. By observing this passage—this transit—of Venus across the sun from different parts of our earth, it was hoped that such information could be obtained as would enable us to measure, not only the distance of the sun from the earth with greater accuracy than heretofore, but also the extent of the whole host of stars that move with our earth around the sun and form what is called our Solar System.

An opportunity occurring so seldom was not to be lost. Learned men were sent to all parts of the world to observe the event. Among others, Captain Cook was sent to the south seas—there, among the far off coral isles, to note the passage of a little star across the sun's face—an apparently trifling, though in reality important, event in the history of science.

So much for the object of Cook's first voyage. Let us now turn to the details thereof.

The vessel chosen by him for his long and dangerous voyage to unknown seas was a small one of only 370 tons burden. It was named the *Endeavour*. The crew consisted of forty-one seamen, twelve marines, and nine servants—these, with the officers and the scientific men of the expedition, made up a body of eighty-five persons.

The scientific men above mentioned were, Mr. Green, an astronomer; Mr. Banks, a naturalist, who afterwards became Sir Joseph Banks and a celebrated man; Doctor Solander, who was also a naturalist, and two draughtsmen, one of whom was skilled in drawing objects of natural history, the other in taking views of scenery.

The *Endeavour* was victualled for a cruise of eighteen months. She was a three-masted vessel of the barque rig, and carried twenty-two large guns, besides a store of small arms, —for the region of the world to which they were bound was inhabited by savages, against whom they might find it necessary to defend themselves.

When all was ready, Captain Cook hoisted his flag, and spread his sails, and, on the 26th of August 1768, the voyage began—England

soon dropped out of sight astern, and ere long the blue sky above and the blue sea below were all that remained for the eyes of the navigators to rest upon.

It is a wonderful thought, when we come to consider it, the idea of *going to sea!* To sailors who are used to it, the thought, indeed, may be very commonplace, and to lazy minds that are not much given to think deeply upon any subject, the thought may not appear very wonderful; but it is so, nevertheless, to us, men of the land, when we calmly sit down and ponder the idea of making to ourselves a house of planks and beams of woods, launching it upon the sea, loading it with food and merchandise, setting up tall poles above its roof, spreading great sheets thereon, and then rushing out upon the troubled waters of the great deep, there, for days and nights, for weeks and months, and even years, to brave the fury of the winds and waves, with nothing between us and death except a wooden plank, some two or three inches thick!

It seems a bold thing for man to act in this fashion, even when he is accustomed to it, and when he knows all about the sea which he sails over; but when, like Cook, he knows very little about the far-off ocean to which he is bound, his boldness seems, and really is, much greater. It is this very uncertainty,

however, that charms the minds of enterprising men and gives interest to such voyages.

The Bible says "they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." Navigators in all ages have borne testimony to the truth of this. The very first pages in Cook's journal mention some of these wonders. He says, that while they were off the coast of Spain, Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, the naturalists, had an opportunity of observing some very curious marine animals, some of which were like jelly, and so colourless that it was difficult to see them in the water except at night, when they became luminous, and glowed like pale liquid fire. One, that was carefully examined, was about three inches long, and an inch thick, with a hollow passing quite through it, and a brown spot at one end which was supposed to be its stomach. Four of these, when first taken up out of the sea in a bucket, were found to be adhering together, and were supposed to be one animal; but on being put into a glass of water they separated and swam briskly about. Many of them resembled precious stones, and shone in the water with bright and beautiful colours. One little animal of this kind lived several hours in a glass of salt water, swimming about with great

agility, and at every motion displaying a change of colours.

These *Medusæ*, as they are called, have been spoken of by many travellers, who tell us that in some parts of the sea they are so numerous that the whole ocean is covered with them, and seems to be composed of liquid fire, usually of a pale blue or green colour. The appearance is described as being of great splendour. Even in the seas on our own coasts this beautiful light is often seen. It is called phosphoric light. Something of the same kind may be seen in the carcass of a decaying fish if taken into a dark room.

Not long after this, they saw flying-fish. Cook says that when seen from the cabin-windows they were beautiful beyond imagination, their sides having the colour and brightness of burnished silver. When seen from the deck they did not look so beautiful, because their backs were of a dark colour. It must not be supposed that these fish could fly about in the air like birds. They can only fly a few yards at a time. They usually rise suddenly from the waves, fly, as if in a great hurry, not more than a yard or two above the surface, and then drop as suddenly back into the sea as they rose out of it. The two fins near the shoulders of the fish are very long, so that they can be used as wings for these short flights. When chased

by their enemy, the dolphin, flying-fish usually take a flight in order to escape. They do not, however, appear to be able to use their eyes when out of the water, for they have been seen to fly against ships at sea, get entangled in the rigging, and fall helpless on the deck. They are not quite so large as a herring, and are considered very good eating.

On drawing near to Cape Horn, on the extreme south of South America, the voyagers began to prepare for bad weather, for this Cape is notorious for its storms. Few mariners approach the Horn without some preparation, for many a good ship has gone to the bottom in the gales that blow there.

It was here that they first fell in with savages. The ship having approached close to that part of the land named Tierra del Fuego, natives were observed on shore. As Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander were anxious to visit them, a boat was lowered and sent ashore. They landed near a bay in the lee of some rocks where the water was smooth. Thirty or forty of the Indians soon made their appearance at the end of a sandy beach on the other side of the bay, but seeing that there were twelve Europeans in the boat they were afraid, and retreated. Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander then advanced about one hundred yards, on which two of the Indians returned, and, having ad-

vanced some paces, sat down. As soon as the gentlemen came up the savages rose and each threw away a small stick which he had carried in his hand. This was intended for a sign of peace. They then walked briskly towards their companions who had halted about fifty yards behind them, and beckoned the gentlemen to follow, which they did. They were received with many uncouth signs of friendship, and, in return, gave the savages some beads and ribbons which greatly delighted them.

A feeling of goodwill having been thus established, the two parties joined and tried to hold converse by means of signs. Three of the Indians agreed to accompany them back to the ship, and when they got on board one of the wild visitors began to go through some extraordinary antics. When he was taken to any new part of the ship, or when he was shown any new thing, he shouted with all his force for some minutes, without directing his voice either to the people of the ship or to his companions.

Some beef and bread being given to them they ate it, but did not seem to relish it much. Nevertheless, such of it as they did not eat they took away with them. But they would not swallow a drop either of wine or spirits. They put the glass to their lips, but, having

tasted the liquor, they returned it with looks of disgust.

Cook says he was much surprised at the want of curiosity in these savages of the Cape, and seems to have formed a very low opinion of them. They were conducted all over the ship, yet, although they saw a vast number of beautiful and curious things that must have been quite new to them, they did not give vent to any expression of wonder or pleasure—for the howling above spoken of did not seem to be either—and when they returned to land they did not seem anxious to tell what they had seen, neither did their comrades appear desirous of hearing anything about their visit to the ship. Altogether, they seemed a much lower race of people than the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands whom Cook afterwards visited.

CHAPTER III.

DESCRIBES AN ADVENTURE IN THE MOUNTAINS, AND TELLS OF TIERRA DEL FUEGO.

ONE of the main objects that Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander had in view in going with Captain Cook on this voyage was to collect specimens of plants and insects in the new countries they were about to visit. The country near Cape Horn was at that time almost unknown, indeed it is not much known even at the present day. The two naturalists of the expedition were therefore anxious to land and explore the shore.

Accordingly, early one fine morning a party went ashore to ascend one of the mountains. It consisted of Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander with their servants, two of whom were negroes; Mr. Buchan, the draughtsman, Mr. Monkhouse, the surgeon of the ship, and Mr. Green, the astronomer. These set off to push as far as they could into the country, intending to return before night. They were accompanied by two seamen who carried their baggage.

The hills, when viewed from a distance, seemed to be partly wooded; above the wood there was a plain, and beyond that bare rocks. Mr. Banks hoped to get through the wood, and made no doubt that beyond it he would find new sorts of plants which no botanist had ever yet heard of. They entered the wood full of hope, and with much of the excitement that men cannot but feel when exploring a country that has never been trodden by the foot of a civilized man since the world began.

It took them, however, much longer to get through the pathless wood than they had expected. It was afternoon before they reached what they had taken for a plain, but which, to their great disappointment, they found to be a swamp covered with low bushes, which were so stubborn that they could not break through them, and were therefore compelled to step over them, while at every step they sank up to the ankles in mud—a mode of progress so fatiguing that they were all very soon exhausted. To make matters worse the weather became gloomy and cold, with sudden blasts of piercing wind accompanied by snow.

They pushed on vigorously notwithstanding, and had well-nigh crossed the swamp when Mr. Buchan was suddenly seized with a fit. This compelled a halt. As he could not go further a fire was kindled, and those who were most

fatigued were left behind to take care of him while the rest continued to advance. At last they reached the summit of the mountain and were rewarded for their toil by the botanical specimens discovered there. It was late in the day by that time, and as it was impossible to get back to the ship that night, they were obliged to make up their minds to bivouac on the mountain, a necessity which caused them no little uneasiness, for it had now become bitterly cold. Sharp blasts of wind became so frequent, however, that they could not remain on the exposed mountain-side, and were obliged to make for the shelter of the woods in the nearest valley.

Mr. Buchan having recovered, and the whole party having reassembled, they set out to re-cross the swamp, intending, when they should get into the woods, to build a hut of leaves and branches, kindle a fire, and pass the night there as well as they could. But an overpowering torpor had now begun to seize hold upon some of the party, and it was with the greatest difficulty the others could prevent the drowsy ones from lying down to sleep in the snow. This almost irresistible tendency to sleep is common in cold countries. It is one of the effects of extreme cold upon exhausted men, and is a very dangerous condition, because those who fall into it cannot resist giving way to it.

even though they know that if they do so they will certainly die.

Dr. Solander, who had formerly travelled on the snow-topped mountains of Norway, was aware of the danger of giving way to this feeling, and strove to prevent his companions from falling into the fatal rest. "Whoever sits down," said he, "will sleep, and whoever sleeps will awake no more."

Strange to say, Dr. Solander was the first to disregard his own warning. While they were still pushing across the naked side of the mountain, the cold became suddenly so intense that it increased the effect they dreaded so much. The doctor found the desire to rest so irresistible that he insisted on being suffered to lie down. Mr. Banks tried to prevent him, but in vain. Down he lay upon the ground, covered though it was with snow, and all that his friends could do was to keep shaking him, and so prevent him from falling into the fatal sleep. At the same time one of the negro servants became affected in a similar manner. Mr. Banks, therefore, sent forward five of the company with orders to get a fire ready at the first convenient place they could find, while himself with four others remained with the doctor and the negro, whom partly by entreaty and partly by force, they roused up and brought on for some little distance. But when they had got

through the greatest part of the swamp they both declared they could go no further. Again Mr. Banks tried to reason with the two unfortunate men, pointing out their extreme danger and beseeching them to make an effort to advance. But all he could say had no effect.

When the negro was told that if he would not go on he must, in a short time, be frozen to death, he answered that he desired nothing but to be allowed to lie down and die. Dr. Solander, on being told the same thing, replied that he was willing to go on, but that he must "*first take some sleep*," forgetting apparently that he had before told his comrades that to sleep was to perish.

As Mr. Banks and his companions could not carry them, there was no help for it—they were suffered to sit down, being partly supported by the bushes. In a few minutes they were both sound asleep. Providentially, just at that time, some of the people who had been sent forward returned with the welcome news that a fire had been lighted not more than a quarter of a mile off. Renewed attempts were therefore made to rouse the sleepers. But the negro was past help. Every effort failed to awaken him. With Dr. Solander they were more successful, yet, though he had not slept five minutes he had almost lost the use of his limbs, and the muscles were so shrunken that the shoes fell off his

feet. Staggering and stumbling among the slush and snow more dead than alive, he was half carried half dragged by his comrades to the fire.

Meanwhile the other negro and a seaman were left in charge of the unfortunate black servant with directions to stay by him and do what they could for him until help should be sent. The moment Dr. Solander was got to the fire, two of the strongest of the party who had been refreshed were sent back to bring in the negro. In half an hour, however, they had the mortification to see these two men return alone. They had been unable to find their comrades. This at first seemed unaccountable, but when it was discovered that the only bottle of rum belonging to the party was amissing, Mr. Banks thought it probable that it had been in the knapsack of one of the absent men, that by means of it the sleeping negro had been revived; that they had then tried to reach the fire without waiting for assistance, and so had lost themselves.

It was by this time quite dark, another heavy fall of snow had come on and continued for two hours, so that all hope of seeing them again alive was given up, for it must be remembered that the men remaining by the fire were so thoroughly knocked up that had they gone out to try to save their comrades they would in all

probability have lost their own lives. Towards midnight, however, a shout was heard at some distance. Mr. Banks with four others went out immediately and found the seaman who had been left with the two negroes, staggering along with just strength enough to keep on his legs. He was quickly brought to the fire, and having described where the other two were, Mr. Banks proceeded in search of them. They were soon found. The first negro, who had sunk down at the same time with Dr. Solander, was found standing on his legs, but unable to move. The other negro was lying on the snow as insensible as a stone.

All hands were now called from the fire, and an attempt was made to carry them to it, but every man was so weak from cold, hunger, and fatigue, that the united strength of the whole party was not sufficient for this. The night was extremely dark, the snow was very deep, and although they were but a short distance from the fire, it was as much as each man could do to make his way back to it, stumbling and falling as he went through bogs and bushes.

Thus the poor negroes were left to their sad fate, and some of the others were so near sharing that fate with them that they began to lose their sense of feeling. One of Mr. Banks's servants became so ill, that it was feared he would die before he could be got to the fire.

At the fire, however, they did eventually arrive, and beside it passed a dreadful night of anxiety, grief, and suffering. Of the twelve who had set out on this unfortunate expedition in health and good spirits, two were dead, a third was so ill that it was doubtful whether he would be able to go forward in the morning, and a fourth, Mr. Buchan, was in danger of a return of his fits. They were distant from the ship a long day's journey, while snow lay deep on the ground and still continued to fall. Moreover, as they had not expected to be out so long, they had no provisions left, except a vulture which chanced to be shot, and which was not large enough to afford each of them quarter of a meal.

When morning dawned nothing was to be seen, as far as the eye could reach, but snow, which seemed to lie as thick upon the trees as on the ground, and the wind came down in such sudden violent blasts, that they did not dare to resume their journey. How long this might last they knew not. Despair crept slowly over them, and they began gloomily to believe that they were doomed to perish of hunger and cold in that dreary waste. But the Almighty, who often affords help to man when his case seems most hopeless and desperate, sent deliverance in a way most agreeable and unexpected. He caused a soft mild breeze to blow, under the

influence of which the clouds began to clear away, the intense cold moderated, and the gladdening sun broke forth, so that with revived spirits and frames the wanderers were enabled to start on the return journey to the coast.

Before doing so, they cooked and ate the vulture, and it is probable that they devoured that meal with fully as much eagerness and satisfaction as the ravenous bird itself ever devoured its prey. It was but a light breakfast, however. After being skinned, the bird was divided into ten portions, and every man cooked his own as he thought fit, but each did not receive above three mouthfuls. Nevertheless it strengthened them enough to enable them to return to the ship, where they were received by their anxious friends with much joy and thankfulness.

The month of December is the middle of summer in the land at the extreme south of South America. That land occupies much about the same position on the southern half of this world that we occupy on the northern half; so that, when it is winter with us, it is summer there. The climate is rigorous and stormy in the extreme, and the description given of the natives shows that they are a wretched and forlorn race of human beings. Captain Cook visited one of their villages

before leaving the coast. It contained about a dozen dwellings of the poorest description. They were mere hovels; nothing more than a few poles set up in a circle and meeting together at the top, each forming a kind of cone. On the weather side each cone was covered with a few boughs and a little grass. The other side was left open to let the light in and the smoke out. Furniture they had none. A little grass on the floor served for chairs, tables, and beds. The only articles of manufacture to be seen among the people were a few rude baskets, and a sort of sack in which they carried the shell-fish which formed part of their food. They had also bows and arrows which were rather neatly made, the arrows with flint heads cleverly fitted on.

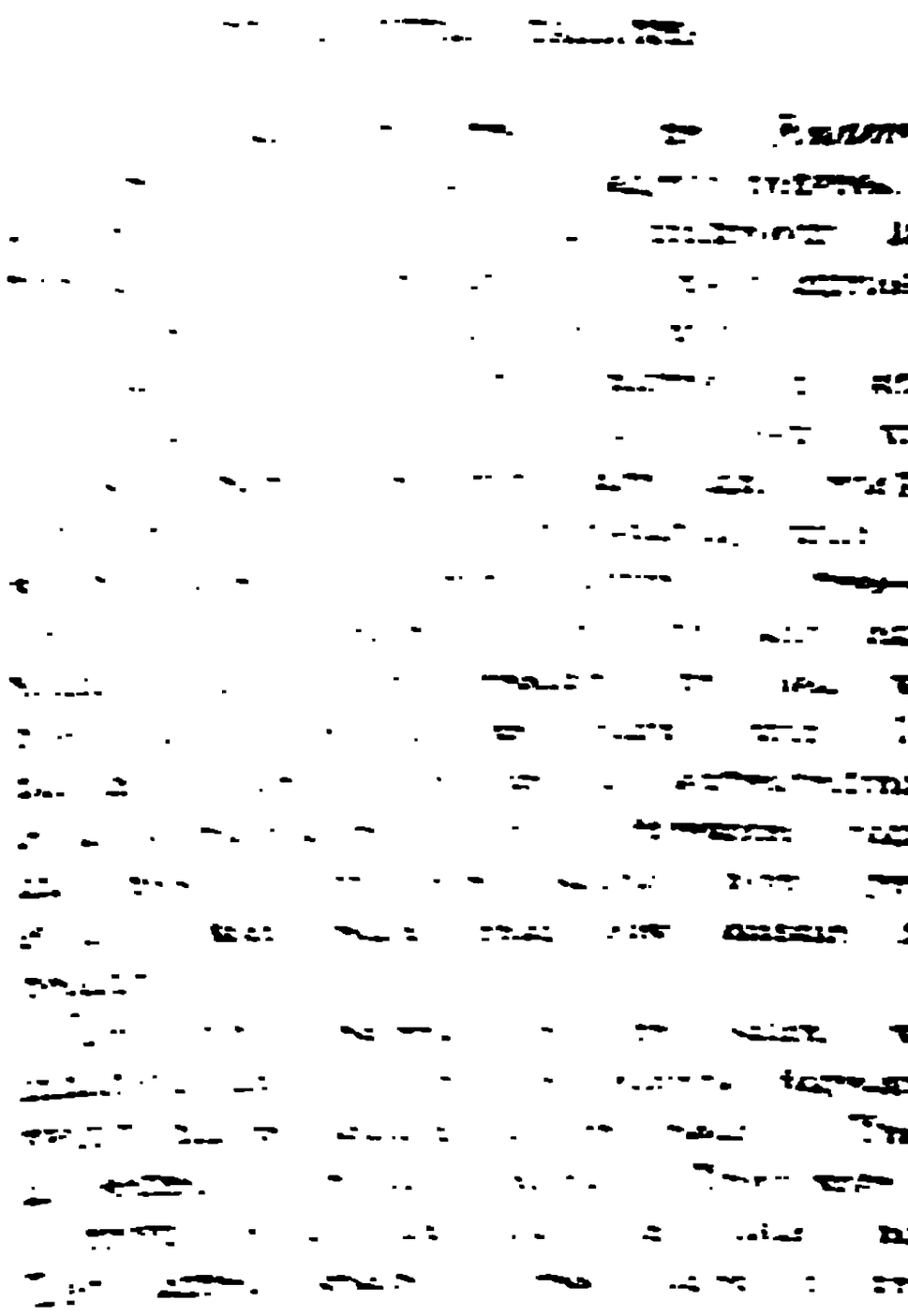
The colour of those savages resembled iron-rust mixed with oil; their hair was long and black. The men were large but clumsy fellows, varying from five feet eight to five feet ten. The women were much smaller, few being above five feet. Their costume consisted of skins of wild animals. The women tied their fur cloaks about the waists with a thong of leather. One would imagine that among people so poor and miserably off, there was not temptation to vain show, nevertheless they were fond of making themselves "look fine!" They painted their faces with various colours;

white round the eyes, with stripes of red and black across the cheeks, but scarcely any two of them were painted alike. Both men and women wore bracelets of beads made of shells and bones, and, of course, they were greatly delighted with the beads which their visitors presented to them. Their language was harsh in sound; they seemed to have no form of government, and no sort of religion. Altogether they appeared to be the most destitute, as well as the most stupid, of all human beings.

CHAPTER IV.

EXPLAINS HOW CORAL ISLANDS ARE MADE.

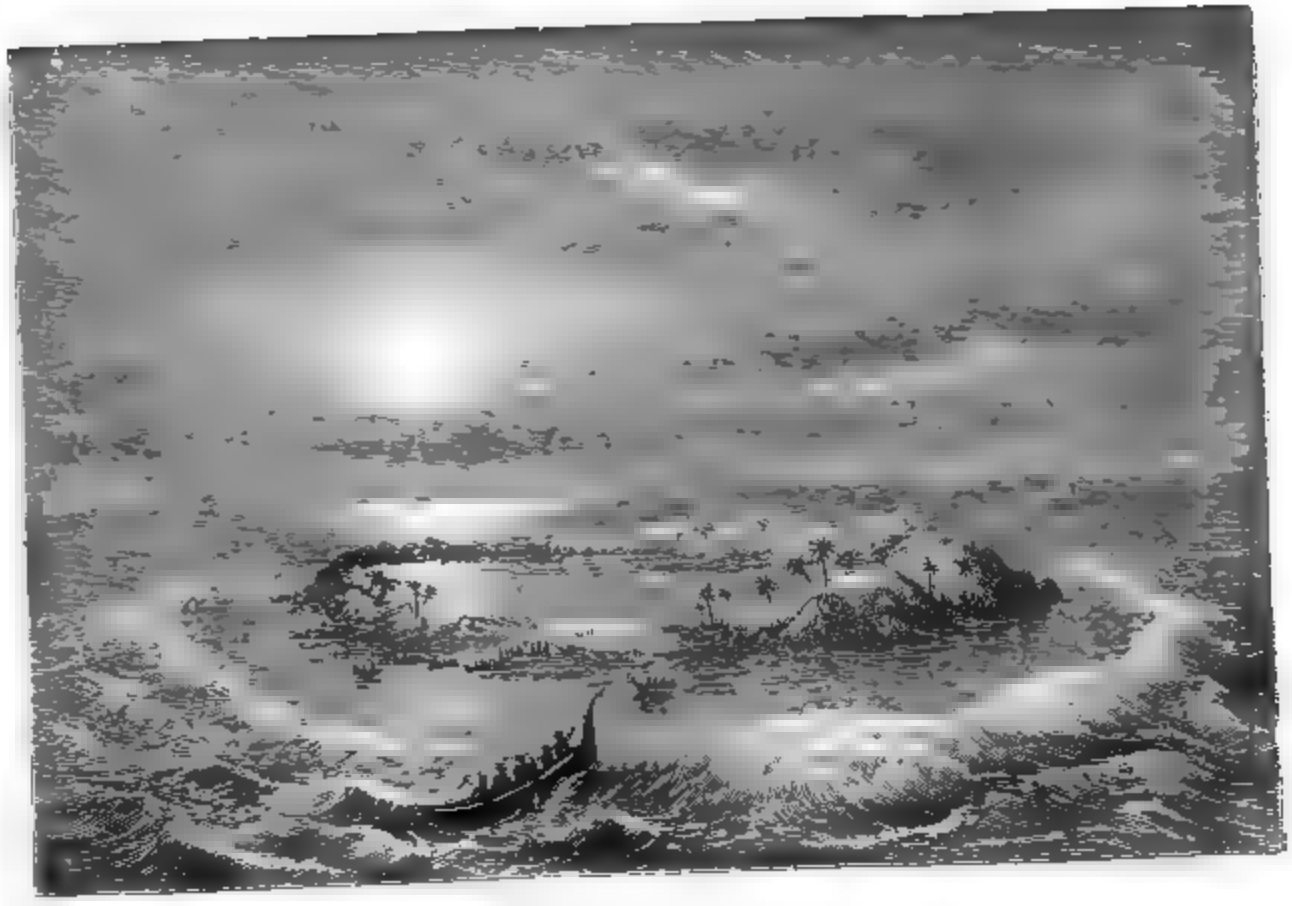
SOON after this adventurous visit to the land of Tierra del Fuego, the *Endeavour* doubled Cape Horn and entered the waters of the great Pacific Ocean; and now Cook began to traverse those unknown seas in which his fame as a discoverer was destined to be made. He sailed over this ocean for several weeks, however, before discovering any land. It was on Tuesday morning, the 10th of April, that he fell in with the first of the coral islands. Mr. Banks's servant, Peter Briscoe, was the first to see it, bearing south, at the distance of about ten or twelve miles, and the ship was immediately run in that direction. It was found to be an island of an oval form, with a lake, or lagoon, in the middle of it. In fact it was like an irregularly-formed ring of land, with the ocean outside and a lake inside. Coral islands vary a good deal in form and size, but the above description is true of many of them.



To this island the crew of the *Endeavour* now drew near with looks of eager interest, as may well be believed, for an unknown land necessarily excites feelings of lively curiosity in the breasts of those who discover it.

It was found to be very narrow in some places, and very low, almost on a level with the sea. Some parts were bare and rocky; others were covered with vegetation, while in several places there were clumps of trees—chiefly cocoa-nut palms. When the ship came within a mile of the breakers, the lead was hove, but no bottom was found with 130 fathoms of line! This was an extraordinary depth so near shore, but they afterwards found that most of the coral islands have great depth of water round them, close outside the breakers.

They now observed that the island was inhabited, and with the glass counted four-and-twenty natives walking on the beach. These all seemed to be quite naked. They were of a brown colour, and had long black hair. They carried spears of great length in their hands, also a smaller weapon which appeared to be either a club or a paddle. The huts of these people were under the shade of some palm-trees, and Captain Cook says, that to him and his men, who had seen nothing but water and sky for many long months, except



LAGOON ISLAND.

the dreary shores of Tierra del Fuego, these groves appeared like paradise.

They called this LAGOON ISLAND. As night came on soon after they reached it, however, they were compelled to sail away without attempting to land.

Not long afterwards another island was discovered. This one was in the shape of a bow, with the calm lake, or lagoon, lying between the cord and the bow. It was also inhabited, but Cook did not think it worth his while to land. The natives here had canoes, and the voyagers waited to give them an opportunity of putting off to the ship, but they seemed afraid to do so.

Now, good reader, you must know that these coral islands of the Pacific are not composed of ordinary rocks, like most other islands of the world, but are literally manufactured or built by millions of extremely small insects which merit particular notice. Let us examine this process of island-making which is carried on very extensively by the artisans of the great South-Sea Factory!

The coral insect is a small creature of the sea which has been gifted with the power of "secreting" or depositing a lime-like substance, with which it builds to itself a little cell or habitation. It fastens this house to a rock at the bottom of the sea. Like many other crea-

tures the coral insect is sociable; it is fond of company, and is never found working except in connexion with millions of its friends. Of all the creatures of earth it shows perhaps the best example of what mighty works can be accomplished by *union*. One man can do comparatively little, but hundreds of men, united in their work, can achieve wonders, as every one knows. They can erect palaces and cathedrals towering to the skies; they can cover hundreds of miles of ground with cities, and connect continents with telegraphs, but, with all their union, all their wisdom, and all their power, men cannot build islands—yet this is done by the coral insect; a thing without hands or brains, a creature with little more than a body and a stomach. It is not much bigger than a pin-head, yet hundreds of the lovely, fertile islands of the Pacific Ocean are formed by this busy animalcule. Many of those islands would never have been there but for the coral insect!

When corallines (as they are called) set about building an island, they lay the foundation on the top of a submarine mountain. The ordinary islands of the sea are neither more nor less than the tops of those mountains which rise from the bottom of the sea and project above the surface. Some of these sea-mountains rise high above the surface and form large

islands; some only peep, so to speak, out of the waves, thus forming small islands; others again do not rise to the surface at all—their highest peaks being several feet below the level of the ocean. It is on these water-covered mountain-tops that the coral insects lay the foundations of their islands. As few mountain peaks are level, however, whether above or below water, the insects find it more convenient to form a ring round the sides of the mountain-top than to build on the exact top itself. Then they set to work with the busy industry of bees. Their talents are few; apparently they have received only one, but they turn that one to good account. They fulfil the work for which they were created. No creature can do more!

They begin to build, and the work advances rapidly, for they are active little masons. The ring round the mountain top soon begins to shoot upwards and extend outwards. As the labourers continue their work their families increase. It is a thriving and a united community. There are neither wars nor disputes —no quarrelling, no misspent time, no misapplied talents. There is unity of action and design, hence the work advances quickly, steadily, and well. In process of time the coral ring becomes a solid wall, which gradually rises above the highest peak of the submarine

mountain, and at length approaches the surface of the sea. When it reaches this point the work is done. The coral insect can only work under water. When its delicate head rises above the wave it ceases to build, and, having done its duty, it dies. Those which reach the surface first die first. The others that are still below water work on, widening and strengthening the wall until they too reach the fatal surface, peep for one moment as it were on the upper world and then perish. Thus the active builders go on adding to the width of the structure and dying by successive relays; working with their little might during their brief existence and knowing nothing of the great end which is to result from their modest busy lives.

With the death of the coral insects the foundation stone of the island is laid, in the form of a ring just peeping out of the ocean. Thenceforth other creatures continue the work. The waves lash and beat upon the uppermost coral cells and break them up into fine white sand. Currents of ocean throw upon this beach pieces of sea-weed and drifting marine substances of various kinds. The winds convey the lighter seeds of land plants to it, and sea-birds that alight upon it to rest do the same thing. Thus, little by little, things accumulate on the top of the coral ring until the summit

rises above the reach and fury of the waves. No sooner is this accomplished than the genial sun of those regions calls the seeds into life. A few blades of green shoot up. These are the little tokens of life that give promise of the luxuriance yet to come. Soon the island-ring is clothed with rich and beautiful vegetation, cocoa-nut palms begin to sprout and sea-fowl to find shelter where, in former days, the waves of the salt sea alone were to be found. In process of time the roving South-sea islanders discover this little gem of ocean, and take up their abode on it, and when such a man as Cook sails past it, he sees, perchance, the naked savage on the beach gazing in wonder at his "big canoe," and the little children swimming like ducks in the calm waters of the lagoon or gambolling like porpoises among the huge breakers outside that roll like driven snow upon the strand.

During their formation, these islands are fraught with danger to ships, for sometimes, in parts of the ocean where charts show deep water, the sailor finds an unexpected coral reef, and, before he is aware, the good ship runs on this living wall and becomes a wreck. Many a noble vessel goes to sea well appointed and with a good brave crew, but never more returns; —who knows how many such have, when all on board thought themselves secure, been

dashed to pieces suddenly, and lost upon the coral reefs of the Pacific?

These circular islets of coral never rise more than a few feet above the surface of the sea, but there are many other islands in the South Seas—some of which have been thrown up by the action of volcanoes, and are wild, rugged, mountainous, and of every conceivable shape and size.

The busy corallines before mentioned are so numerous in the South Seas that they build their coral walls everywhere. As they have an objection apparently to commence building in shallow water, they are obliged to keep off the shore a distance of a mile or more, so that when they reach the surface they enclose a belt of water of that width, which is guarded by the reef from the violence of the waves, and forms a splendid natural harbour. Almost every South-sea island has its coral reef round it, and its harbour of still water between the reef and the shore.

It would seem as if the beneficent Creator had purposely formed those harbours for man's convenience, because narrow openings are found in all the reefs, without which, of course, the sheltered waters within could not have been entered. These openings are usually found to occur opposite valleys where the streams from the mountains enter the sea. It is

therefore supposed that fresh water kills the coral insects at these places, thus preventing the reef from forming an unbroken circle. Low islets are usually formed on each side of the openings on which a few cocoa-nut trees grow; so that the mariner is thus furnished with a natural beacon by which to guide his vessel clear of the reef safely into the harbour.

One of the most interesting of the larger islands of the Pacific is Otaheite (now spelt and pronounced Tahiti), at which Captain Cook arrived on the 4th of April 1769. It had been discovered, however, nearly two years before the date of his visit—as the next chapter will show.

CHAPTER V.

DISCOVERY BY CAPTAIN WALLIS OF OTAHEITE OR TAHITI.

THE beautiful island of Tahiti was discovered by Captain Wallis in the year 1767.

It was on a bright day in June when he first saw it from the deck, but when his vessel (the *Dolphin*) came close to it, a thick mist descended like a veil and shut it out from view of the impatient mariners, who were compelled to lie to until the mist should clear away. At length it rolled off, and disclosed one of the most lovely and delightful scenes that could be imagined.

The *Dolphin* being the first ship that ever touched at Tahiti, the natives, as we may well imagine, were filled with amazement at its vast size and curious shape. No sooner did the ship draw near than she was surrounded by hundreds of canoes, containing altogether nearly a thousand naked savages. At first the poor creatures were afraid to draw near. They sat in their little barks gazing at the "big canoe" in silent wonder, or talking to

each other about her in low eager tones, but never for a moment taking their eyes off this great sight!

At last, after consulting together, they began to paddle slowly round the ship, and make signs of peace and friendship, which those on board were not slow to return, endeavouring to induce some of them to come on deck. This they were naturally afraid to do, but at length one fellow took heart and began by making a speech, which lasted for full fifteen minutes. As none of the sailors understood a word of it, they were not much enlightened; but the savage, who held a branch of the plantain-tree in his hand during his oration, concluded by casting this branch into the sea. This was meant as a sign of friendship, for soon after a number of similar branches were thrown on the ship's deck, and then a few of the islanders ventured on board.

There was "much talk," however, on the part of the savages, before they began to feel at ease. Trinkets of various kinds were now offered to them, and they gazed around them with great interest, gradually losing their fears under the kindness of Captain Wallis and his companions. This happy state of things, however, was suddenly interrupted by a goat belonging to the ship, which, not liking the appearance of the strangers, attacked one of

them unceremoniously, and butted at him with its head. Turning quickly round, the savage was filled with terror on beholding a creature, the like of which he had never seen before, reared on its hind legs, and preparing to repeat the blow. Without a moment's hesitation he rushed in consternation to the ship's side, and plunged into the sea, whither he was followed by all his countrymen in the twinkling of an eye. A storm of musket bullets could not have cleared the deck more quickly than did the attack of that pugnacious goat!

In a short time they recovered from their terrors, the ill-behaved goat was removed, and some of the natives were again induced to return on board, where they were treated with the utmost kindness, and presented with such trifling gifts as beads and nails, etc., much to their delight. Notwithstanding this, however, the visit terminated inharmoniously in consequence of one of the natives snatching a gold-laced hat from an officer's head, and jumping with it into the sea!

After this Wallis stood in-shore intending to anchor, and sent his boats still closer to the land to take soundings. Here they were immediately surrounded by a great number of canoes, and the captain, suspecting the natives of hostile intentions, fired a nine-pounder over their heads. They were much startled by the

unknown and terrible sound, but, seeing that no result followed, they proceeded to attack the boats, sending showers of stones into them, and wounding some of the men. It now became necessary to act in earnest, so a musket shot was discharged at the savage who began the attack. The ball pierced his shoulder, whereupon the whole host paddled to the shore in great terror and confusion.

Notwithstanding this, the islanders soon returned to the ship with their boughs of peace: a speech was made by one of them. A few trinkets were given by the Europeans, and friendship was again restored; but next morning, when the boats were in-shore searching for fresh water, a second attack was made upon them. Three large canoes ran against the ship's cutter, and stove in some of her upper planks. The natives were about to leap on board when a volley was fired into them, and two of their number fell into the sea. On seeing this they instantly retired, and the wounded men were dragged into the canoes.

Never having seen the effects of fire-arms before, the astonished savages apparently could not understand what was wrong with their comrades. They set them on their feet, but finding they could not stand, they tried to make them sit upright. One of them being

only wounded, was able to remain in this position, but the other was dead, so they had to lay him in the bottom of their canoe. Once again they made peaceful signs, and Wallis, who was most anxious to avoid bloodshed, met them more than half way. Traffic was speedily opened, and a considerable quantity of fruit, fowls, and hogs were obtained in exchange for scissors, knives, beads, and small trinkets of little value. But this did not last long. Warlike preparations were renewed by the natives, and many of their canoes were seen to be filled with large pebbles. At last an attack was made on the ship itself, and a regular battle was fought.

This happened early in the morning when the sailors were engaged trafficking with the people in the canoes that contained provisions. Captain Wallis observed, with some anxiety, that, besides those provision canoes, many others of large size and filled with stones were gradually crowding round the ship; he, therefore kept part of the crew armed, and loaded his guns. More canoes were putting off from shore and crowding round until there were about three hundred of them, with upwards of two thousand men, some of whom sang a gruff sort of war-song, while others blew into a shell as if it were a trumpet, and some played on an instrument resembling a flute.

In the midst of these discordant noises one canoe, larger than the others, and with a canopy over it, pushed alongside, and a naked warrior handed up a bunch of red and yellow feathers. This was, of course, supposed to be a sign of peace, but such was not the case. Immediately afterwards the canoe pushed off and the leader threw into the air the branch of a cocoa-nut tree. This was the signal. A general shout burst from the savages; the canoes made for the ship, and showers of stones were thrown on board. Many of these stones were fully two pounds weight, and as they were thrown with great force, some of the sailors were severely wounded.

The crew of the *Dolphin* rushed to quarters. The watch on deck instantly opened a fire of musketry on those nearest the ship, and two of the quarter-deck swivel guns, which happened to be loaded with small shot, were also discharged. This warm and vigorous reception checked the attack for a few minutes; but the courage of the savages was aroused. They quickly renewed the assault, coming on in all directions, and receiving constant reinforcements from the shore. But now the great guns of the ship were brought into play; the thunder of artillery echoed, for the first time, from the mountain-sides of Tahiti; and, as the heavy balls tore up the sea and crashed upon

the shore, the terrified natives in the canoes nearest the ship took to flight.

Seeing this, the captain at once ordered the fire to cease, being anxious to do as little harm as possible. This, however, had the effect of restoring confidence to the natives, who lay for some time gazing at the ship from a considerable distance. They had evidently profited by their short experience in this new style of warfare, for, observing that the terrible iron shower came thundering only from the *sides* of the ship, they made their next attack on the bow and stern—advancing with much daring, and throwing their stones with great violence and good aim, insomuch that some more of the men were severely hurt.

There is no saying what might have been the end of this fight, had not a lucky cannon-shot, fired from one of the great guns that had been run out at the bow, hit the canoe of the savage chief, and cut it in two. A result so tremendous had the effect of filling the hearts of the savages with terror. Every canoe turned tail and made for the shore in dire confusion, while the people who had crowded the beach took to their heels and ran over the hills in the utmost haste, as if they felt their only safety lay in placing the mountains between them and the terrible strangers in the big canoe. In half an hour not a single canoe was to be seen!

Captain Wallis now hoped that the natives would feel his immense superiority, and cease a useless contest, but he was mistaken. He was not yet done with them. They were a very determined set of men. Soon after this fight they were observed making preparations for a renewed attack. They could be seen pouring over the hills in all directions and lurking in the thickets, while, round the point, numbers of war-canoes came paddling to the beach, where fresh warriors and bags of stones were embarked. It was evident that a grand attack was to be made; so Wallis prepared to repel it. Soon after, the bay was crowded with canoes as they paddled straight and swift toward the ship. At once the great guns opened with terrible effect, and so tremendous a fire was kept up that the entire flotilla was almost instantly dispersed. Many of the canoes were run ashore and deserted; others fled round the point, and the savages took to the woods. Into these the fire was then directed, and the natives, who doubtless imagined that no danger could penetrate from such a distance into the heart of their thick bushes, were driven, astonished and horrified, up a hill on which thousands of women and children had taken up their position to witness the fight.

Here they deemed themselves quite safe,

but Captain Wallis resolved to show them that they were not so. He thought that the best thing he could do would be to inspire them with a wholesome dread of his tremendous artillery, so he ordered the guns to be fired at the crowded hill. The shots tore up the earth near a tree under which a dense crowd was collected. It need scarcely be added that the whole host fled on the wings of terror, and in less than two minutes not a man, woman, or child was to be seen.

The natives now at length submitted. Not many hours after the close of this fight, a few of them came down to the beach carrying green boughs which they stuck into the sand, and placed beside them a peace-offering of hogs and dogs and bundles of native cloth. Of course Wallis was right glad to accept it, and in return gave them presents of hatchets, nails, and other things. Peace was now thoroughly established, and the two parties engaged in amicable traffic with as much good will as if they had neither quarrelled nor fought. The queen of the island visited the ship, and from that time till the *Dolphin* left, everything went smoothly.

The ignorance of the natives as to the relative value of various metals was curiously shown one day. In order to find out what things they liked best, Captain Wallis spread

before them a coin called a johannes, a guinea, a crown piece, a Spanish dollar, a few shillings, some new halfpence, and two large nails, and made signs to them to help themselves. The nails were first seized with great eagerness, and then a few of the glittering new halfpence, but the silver and gold lay neglected!

The friendship thus established continued to increase as long as Wallis remained there, and when at length he took his departure the natives exhibited every sign of extreme regret —the queen especially was inconsolable, and wept bitterly when she bade them farewell.

Such were a few of the scenes that occurred at the discovery of Tahiti, an island which has since become famous as the scene of the residence of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, and the field of much earnest and deeply interesting missionary labour.

CHAPTER VI.

CAPTAIN COOK'S VISIT TO TAHITI.

LESS than two years after the discovery of Tahiti by Wallis, Captain Cook arrived in the *Endeavour* at the same island. He first saw its high mountains rise on the horizon on the 11th of June 1769, and soon afterwards a few canoes came off to the ship, but the natives were timid at first. They evidently had not forgotten the thundering guns and crashing shot of the *Dolphin*.

In every canoe there were young plantains and branches of trees, which latter were intended as tokens of peace and friendship. The people in one of the canoes ventured to the ship, and handed these branches up the side, making signals at the same time with great earnestness. At first the sailors were unable to make out their meaning, but at length, guessing that they wished those symbols to be placed in some conspicuous part of the ship, they immediately stuck them about the rigging, upon which the natives expressed the

greatest satisfaction. Cook then purchased the cargoes of the canoes, consisting of cocoa-nuts and various kinds of fruits, which, after their long voyage, were most acceptable.

Next morning the *Endeavour* was safely anchored in a bay called by the natives Matavai. Here the visitors were received with much kindness. The natives regarded them with great respect and awe; the first man who approached them crouching so low that he almost crept on his hands and knees. Then two of the chiefs came forward, and each selected his friend. One chose Cook, and the other selected Mr. Banks, and each, taking off the greater part of his clothes, put them solemnly on his chosen friend.

On visiting their houses afterwards, they passed through delightful groves of trees which were loaded with cocoa-nuts and bread-fruit. These were found to be most excellent food. Before becoming quite ripe the liquid inside the cocoa-nut is said to resemble lemonade; when riper it is more like milk, and the bread-fruit nut, when properly dressed, is like the crumb of wheaten bread; so that it may be said of those favoured regions, with some degree of truth, that the people find something like bread and milk growing on the trees! There is indeed little occasion there for men to work. The fruits of the earth grow

luxuriantly in a wild state; hence the natives, although a strong and active race, are habitually indolent. It has been proved, however, that when the blessed influence of the Christian religion is brought to bear on them, the South Sea islanders are, in mind and body, good specimens of mankind.

One of the houses visited by Cook, in company with Messrs. Banks and Monkhouse, Dr. Solander and others, on his first landing, was that of Tootahah, a middle-aged man, who seemed to be a person of rank. He received them hospitably, spread mats for the party, desired them to sit down by his side, and gave them an excellent dinner of bread-fruit, cocoa-nuts, plantains, and fish—the latter raw as well as dressed. Cook naturally preferred his fish cooked, but the natives seemed to relish it raw! Thereafter Tootahah presented Mr. Banks and Captain Cook with a cock and hen, which curious gifts they accepted with many thanks, and in return gave Tootahah a laced silk neckcloth and a pocket handkerchief, in which he immediately dressed himself with immense satisfaction. Mr. Banks seems to have been a favourite with the savage ladies, for they plied him earnestly with cocoa-nut milk. He, as well as Cook, received a further gift of native cloth, which, although rough in texture, was agreeably perfumed.

Beads and other ornaments were presented to the women, and altogether the new friends were becoming mutually delighted with each other when a sudden interruption to the harmonious meeting was caused by the discovery that some of the savages had acquired the art of picking pockets. A snuff-box belonging to Mr. Monkhouse disappeared, and an opera-glass in a shagreen case, the property of Dr. Solander, vanished. To pass over a first act of this kind lightly would have led to interminable pilferings and quarrellings. Mr. Banks, therefore, started up angrily and struck the butt of his musket violently on the ground. Whereupon the most of the natives were panic-stricken and darted out of the hut with the utmost precipitation. The chief endeavoured to appease the wrath of his guests by offering them gifts of cloth; but they were not thus to be silenced. They insisted on the restoration of the stolen articles, so the chief went out and shortly after returned with a beaming countenance—he had found them both; but his countenance fell when, on opening the case of the opera-glass, the glass itself was not there. With immense energy he resumed his detective duties, and was so fortunate as to recover the glass in a short time. Thus peace was restored, and the natives were taught to feel that their propensity to steal would prove a source of

great annoyance and some danger to them should they venture to give way to it in future.

Soon after this, Cook selected a spot on the beach, not far from the ship, and, pitching his tent there, began to arrange for making the astronomical observations which had brought him to the South Seas. They had not remained long, however, before they found that the islanders were all addicted to stealing. Cook tells us that men and women of all ranks were the "arrantest thieves upon the face of the earth," yet they seemed to feel that the act of theft was wrong, for if charged with being guilty, when they were in reality innocent, they were often moved to passionate indignation.

One day, when a large number of natives visited the ship, the chiefs employed themselves in stealing what they could in the cabin, while their dependants were no less industrious in other parts of the ship. They snatched up everything that it was possible for them to secrete till they got on shore. Two knives had been lost on shore, one of them belonging to Mr. Banks, who taxed a man named Tubourai Tamaide, whom he suspected, with the theft. The man denied it stoutly, but upon Mr. Banks saying firmly that, no matter who had taken it, he was determined to have it back, another native, feeling alarmed for his own safety, stepped forward and produced a rag in which

three knives were tied up. One belonged to Dr. Solander, another to Captain Cook; the owner of the third was not known. Mr. Banks continued to charge Tubourai Tamaide with the theft of his knife, and the poor man continued to deny it indignantly. Not long after, it was discovered to have been mislaid by Mr. Banks's own servant, who at length found it. Upon this demonstration of his innocence, Tubourai expressed strong emotions of mind. The fellow was, doubtless, as great a thief as the rest of his comrades, but on this occasion he felt himself to be an injured innocent, and refused to be comforted until Mr. Banks expressed great sorrow for his unjust accusation and made him a few trifling presents, whereupon he immediately forgot his wrongs and was perfectly reconciled!

In his dealings with these natives, Captain Cook invariably acted with the gentleness, firmness, and wisdom of a truly great man, and at all times treated evil-doers with impartial justice.

One day a chief came to the tent on the beach in a state of intense excitement, and, hastily seizing Mr. Banks by the arm, made signs that he should follow him. Mr. Banks immediately complied, and soon came to a place where they found the ship's butcher with a reaping-hook in his hand. Here the chief stopped, and in a transport of rage explained as well as he could by signs, that the butcher

had threatened to cut his wife's throat with the hook. Mr. Banks assured him that, if he could fully explain the offence, the man should be punished. Upon this he became calm, and explained that the offender, having taken a fancy to a stone hatchet which lay in his house, had offered to purchase it of his wife for a nail; that she having refused to part with it, he had seized it, and, throwing down the nail, threatened to cut her throat if she made any resistance. As the nail and hatchet were produced in proof of this charge, and the butcher had little to say in his defence, there was no reason to doubt its truth.

On the matter being reported to Cook, he took the opportunity of the chief and his wives with a number of natives being on board the ship, to call up the butcher, and, after repeating the charge and proof, he gave orders that the man should be punished. The natives looked on with fixed attention while the man was being stripped and tied up to the rigging, waiting in silent suspense for the event; but as soon as the first stroke was given they interfered with great agitation, earnestly entreating that he might be forgiven. Cook, however, did not think it advisable to agree to this. He would not consent, and, when they found that their entreaties were of no avail, they gave vent to their pity in tears.

CHAPTER VII.

SHOWS WHAT VANITY WILL INDUCE MEN AND WOMEN TO DO.

IT fills one with wonder to think of the strange and absurd things that men, in all ages and in all parts of the world, have done to themselves in order to improve their personal appearance. The flat-head Indian of North America squeezes his forehead out of shape; the eastern beauty blackens her teeth and nails; the Chinaman shaves the hair of his head, leaving a tuft on the top; the Englishman shaves the hair off his face, leaving a tuft on each cheek,—and all of these deluded mortals run thus deliberately in the face of nature, under the impression that by so doing they are improving their personal appearance!

Not to be behindhand, the South Sea islanders tatoo themselves. In other words, they prick a multitude of little holes in their skins, and rub into these some colouring matter, which, when thoroughly fixed, cannot again be washed out. The ornamental devices with which they thus, more or less, cover their

persons, are sometimes very cleverly and tastefully done; and they would be really admirable if depicted on a piece of wood or a sheet of paper, but when applied to the human body they are altogether ridiculous.

The operation of tatooing is a very painful one; so much so, that a great deal of it cannot be done at one time, and it is said that persons sometimes die during the process. The inhabitants of nearly all the islands practise it. Usually it is commenced at the age of eight or ten, and continued at intervals till the individual is between twenty and thirty years of age.

So important and difficult is the art of tatooing, that men devote themselves to it professionally, and these professors are well paid for their work. Here is an account of the operation.

The professor, having his victim on the ground before him, takes up his instrument of torture. This consists of a small piece of stick with sharp bones of birds or fishes attached to it. Having previously sketched with a piece of charcoal the pattern intended to be tatooed, he dips the points of the sharp bones into a colouring matter (which is a beautiful jet black, procured from the kernel of the candle-nut), applies it to the surface of the skin, and strikes it smartly with a piece

of stick held in his right hand. The skin is punctured in this way, and the dye injected. With the calmness of an operator, and the gravity of an artist, the professor proceeds as long as his patient can endure the pain. Then he ceases, and when the part is sufficiently recovered, the operation is continued until the device or pattern is finished.

These patterns vary among different islanders. They consist of circular and curving lines, and representations of palm-trees, animals, etc., on the face and body; and to such an extent is tatooing carried, that the whole body is sometimes covered so as nearly to conceal the original colour of the skin.

Mr. Ellis, who wrote long after the gallant Cook was in his grave, tells us in his most interesting work on the South Sea Islands,* that the inhabitants of Tahiti were more simple in their tatooing, and displayed greater taste and elegance than some of the other islanders. "Though some of the figures are arbitrary, such as stars, circles, lozenges, etc., the patterns are usually taken from nature, and are often some of the most graceful. A cocoa-nut tree is a favourite object; and I have often admired the taste displayed in the marking of a chief's leg, on which I have seen a cocoa-nut tree correctly and distinctly drawn; its roots spread-

* Ellis's *Polynesian Researches.*

ing at the heel, its elastic stalk pencilled as it were along the tendon, and its waving plume gracefully spread out on the broad part of the calf. Sometimes a couple of stems would be twined up from the heel and divide on the calf, each bearing a plume of leaves.

"The ornaments round the ankle and upon the instep, make them often appear as if they wore the elegant eastern sandal. The sides of the legs are sometimes tatooed from the ankle upward, which gives the appearance of wearing pantaloons with ornamental seams. From the lower part of the back, a number of straight, waved, or zig-zag lines rise in the direction of the spine, and branch off regularly towards the shoulder. But, of the upper part of the body, the chest is the most tatooed. Every variety of figure is to be seen here,—cocoa-nut and bread-fruit trees, with convolvulus wreaths hanging round them, boys gathering fruit, men engaged in battle, in the manual exercise, triumphing over a fallen foe; or, as I have frequently seen it, they are represented as carrying a human sacrifice to the temple. Every kind of animal—goats, dogs, fowls, and fish—may at times be seen on this part of the body; muskets, swords, pistols, clubs, spears, and other weapons of war, are also stamped upon their arms and chest."

These figures are not all crowded upon the

same person, but each man makes a selection according to his fancy. The women also tatoo their persons, but not to such an extent as the men, and their designs and figures are usually more tasteful.

Cook says that Mr. Banks saw this operation performed on the back of a girl about thirteen years old. The instrument used upon this occasion had thirty teeth; about a hundred strokes were given in the minute, and each stroke drew a little blood. The girl bore it bravely for about a quarter of an hour; but at the end of that time the pain of so many hundred punctures became unbearable. She first complained in murmurs, then wept, and at last burst into loud lamentations, earnestly beseeching the operator to stop. He, however, firmly refused, and when she began to struggle, she was held down by two women, who sometimes soothed and sometimes scolded her, and, now and then, when she became very unruly, gave her a smart blow. Mr. Banks stayed in a neighbouring house an hour, and the operation was not over when he went away, yet it was performed only on one side of the back; the other had been tatooed some time before, and the loins had still to be done.

Tahiti is now one of the civilized islands of the South Seas. At the time of Cook's visit, the natives were absolutely savages. They

lived in a state of partial nakedness, and their manners and customs were of the grossest description. Their religion and superstitions were degrading in the extreme, and, until Christianity obtained a hold upon them, they delighted in war, and practised horrible cruelties on their enemies.

Yet, even in their low condition, there were good points about those islanders. Cook says that they were as large as the largest-sized Europeans. The men were tall, strong, well-limbed, and finely shaped. The tallest he saw, on a neighbouring island, was a man who measured six feet three inches and a half. The women of the superior rank were above our middle stature, but those of the inferior class rather below it. Their complexion was a kind of clear olive or *brunette*, and the skin of the women was smooth and soft. They had no colour in their cheeks, but their faces were comely; the cheek-bones were not high, neither were the eyes hollow. Their eyes were sparkling and full of expression, and their teeth good, but their noses being flat, did not correspond with his ideas of beauty. Their hair was black and coarse. The men had beards, which they wore in many fashions, always, however, plucking out great part of them, and keeping the rest perfectly clean and neat.

In most countries it is the custom of the men to wear short and the women long hair. Here, however, Cook found this custom reversed. The women cut it short round the ears, and the men—except the fishermen, who were almost continually in the water—suffered it to flow in large waves over their shoulders, or tied it up in a bunch on the top of their heads. They were in the habit of anointing it with cocoa-nut oil, which had the effect of rendering their heads very filthy; but in other respects the natives of Tahiti were remarkable for cleanliness.

Their clothing consisted of native-made cloth or matting, and was very scanty, but in many cases was tastefully put on and intermingled with flowers. Some of the men wore a feather in their hair; others wore a wig made of the hair of men and dogs. Both sexes wore ear-rings made of pieces of stone, shells, or berries, which were speedily exchanged, however, for the beads given to them by the sailors, for, like all other savages, they delighted in gay ornaments.

The houses of these people were very simple. They consisted of nothing more than a thatched roof mounted upon pillars. They had no walls whatever, and were open to every wind of heaven, but in so warm a climate this was not considered a disadvantage. There were no

rooms or partitions of any kind in them, and they were usually large. Some belonged to families, others were the public property of a district, and these last were sometimes two hundred feet long by thirty broad.

All the houses were built in the woods that lay between the sea and the mountains. No more ground was cleared for each house than was just sufficient to prevent the droppings of the branches from falling on the roof; so that the inhabitant could step at once from his cottage into the shade of the forest, which was the most delightful and romantic that could be imagined. It consisted of groves of bread-fruit and cocoa-nut trees without underwood, and paths led in all directions through it from one house to another. Only those travellers who have experienced the intense overpowering heat of tropical countries can form a just conception of the enjoyableness of a ramble through the shady groves of Tahiti.

The food eaten by the natives was chiefly vegetable. They had tame hogs, dogs, and poultry, but these were not plentiful, and the visit of Cook's ship soon diminished the numbers of animals very considerably. When a chief killed a hog it was divided almost equally amongst his dependants, and as these were numerous, the share of each individual at a feast was not large. Dogs and fowls fell to

the lot of the lower classes. Cook says that he could not commend the flavour of their fowls, but he and his crew unanimously agreed that a South Sea dog was little inferior to English lamb! He conjectured that their excellence was owing to the fact that they were fed exclusively upon vegetables.

Like everything else in Tahiti, the art of cooking was somewhat peculiar. The preparation of a dog for dinner is thus described :— "The dog, which was very fat, we consigned over to Tupia, who undertook to perform the double office of butcher and cook. He killed him by holding his hands close over his mouth and nose, an operation which continued above a quarter of an hour. While this was going on, a hole was made in the ground about a foot deep, in which a fire was kindled, and some small stones were placed in layers alternately with the wood to get heated. The dog was then singed by holding him over the fire, and by scraping him with a shell, the hair came off as clean as if he had been scalded in hot water. He was then cut up with the same instrument, and his entrails, being taken out, were sent to the sea, where, being carefully washed, they were put into cocoa-nut shells with what blood came from the body.

"When the hole was sufficiently heated, the fire was removed, and some of the stones,—

which were not so hot as to discolour anything that touched them,—being placed in the bottom, were covered with green leaves. The dog and the entrails were then placed upon the leaves, other leaves were placed above them, the whole was covered up with the remainder of the hot stones, and the mouth of the hole was closed with mould. In somewhat less than four hours it was again opened and the dog taken out excellently baked. Nearly all the fish and flesh eaten by the inhabitants is dressed in this way."

The sea in those regions affords the natives great variety of fish; the smaller of which they usually eat raw. They have also lobsters, crabs, and other shell-fish, all of which they are very fond of. Indeed, nothing seems to come amiss to them. They even eat what sailors call *blubbers*, though some of these are so tough that they have to allow them to become putrid before they can chew them.

Their chief vegetable, the bread-fruit, is so curious a plant that it merits particular notice. It costs them no more trouble or labour to procure it than the climbing of a tree. In regard to this tree Cook says that it does not indeed shoot up spontaneously, but if a man plants ten of them in his lifetime, which he may do in about an hour, he will sufficiently fulfil his duty to his own and to future generations. True,

the bread-fruit is not always in season; but when its ready-made loaves are not to be had, the South-sea islander has plenty of cocoa-nuts, bananas, plantains, and other fruits to supply its place.

The bread-fruit tree is large and beautiful. Its trunk, which is light-coloured and rough, grows to a height of twelve or twenty feet, and is sometimes three feet in diameter. Its leaves are broad, dark green, and a foot or eighteen inches long. The fruit, about the size of a child's head, is round, covered with a rough rind, and is at first of a light pea-green hue; subsequently it changes to brown, and, when fully ripe, assumes a rich yellow colour. It hangs to the branches singly, or in clusters of two or three together. One of these magnificent trees, clothed with its dark shining leaves and loaded with many hundreds of large light green or yellowish fruit, is one of the most beautiful objects to be met with among the islands of the south.

The pulp of the bread-fruit between the rind and the core is all eatable. The core itself, which is about the size and shape of the handle of a knife, is uneatable. The bread-fruit is never eaten raw. The usual mode of dressing it is to remove the rind and the core, divide the pulp into three or four pieces, and bake it in an oven similar to the one just described. When taken out, in somewhat less than an

hour, the outside of the fruit is nicely browned, and the inner part so strongly resembles the crumb of wheaten bread as to have suggested the name of the tree. It is not, however, quite so pleasant to the taste, being rather insipid and slightly sweet. Nevertheless it is extremely good for food, and is much prized by the natives, to whom it may almost be said to be the staff of life.

The tree on which this excellent fruit grows, besides producing two, and, in some cases, three crops in a year, furnishes a species of gum, or resin, which oozes from the bark when cut, and hardens when exposed to the sun. It is used for pitching the seams of canoes. The bark of the young branches is employed in making several varieties of native cloth. The wood of the tree is also valuable for building houses and canoes. There are nearly fifty varieties of the bread-fruit tree, for which the natives have distinct names, and as these varieties ripen at different times, there are few months in the year in which the fruit is not to be had.

Not less valuable to the natives of these islands is the cocoa-nut tree, the stem of which is three or four feet in diameter at the root, whence it tapers gradually without branch or leaf to the top, where it terminates in a beautiful tuft or plume of long green leaves which wave gracefully in every breeze.

One of the singular peculiarities of this tree is its power of flourishing in almost any soil. It grows equally well on the mountain side, in the rich valleys beside the streams, and on the barren sea-beach of the coral reefs, where its only soil is sand, and where its roots are watered by the waves of every rising tide. Another peculiarity is, that fruit in every stage may be seen on the same tree at one time—from the first formation, after the falling of the blossom, to the ripe nut. As the tree is slow in growth, the nuts do not probably come to perfection until twelve months after the blossoms have fallen. The successive ripening of the nuts, therefore, seems to have been purposely arranged by our beneficent Creator, with a special view to the comfort of man. Each nut is surrounded by a tough husk, or shell, nearly two inches thick, and when it has reached its full size it contains a pint, or a pint and a half, of the juice usually called cocoa-nut milk.

The kernels of the tough outer husks, above referred to, are the "cocoa-nuts" which we see exposed for sale in this country, but these nuts give no idea of the delightful fruit when plucked from the tree. They are old and dry, and the milk is comparatively rancid. In the state in which we usually see cocoa-nuts they are never used by the natives except as seed, or for the extraction of oil.

Some varieties of this tree grow to a height of sixty or seventy feet. As all the nuts are at the top, the gathering of them would be an extremely difficult matter were it not for an ingenious contrivance by which the natives manage to climb the trees; for it may be easily understood that to *shin* up an exceedingly rough pole of seventy feet high, with bare legs, would try the metal of most men—civilized as well as savage. The plan is simple. The native strips off a piece of tough bark from a branch, and therewith tiés his feet together, leaving them, however, several inches apart, grasping the trunk with his arms he presses his feet against each side of the tree so that the piece of bark between them catches in the roughesses of the stem; this gives him a purchase by which he is enabled to leap or vault up like a monkey.

The wood of the tree is excellent. The natives make pillars for their houses and their best spears from it. A species of what we may call natural cloth is found, ready made, on its leaves, with which they make sacks, and shirts, and jackets. Plaited leaflets form coverings for their floors. Baskets are made from the leaves; matting and cordage of the fibrous husk, and oil is extracted from the nut. Besides all this, the shells of the old nuts are used as water bottles, and, when carved and

highly polished, they form elegant drinking-cups.

The perfect adaptation of the bread-fruit and cocoa-nut trees to the varied wants of the South-sea islanders, tells, more eloquently than could be told in words, of the wisdom and benevolence with which the Almighty cares for His creatures, even while those creatures are living in the habitual neglect of Himself, and in the violation of all His laws.

CHAPTER VIII.

TREATS OF SAVAGE WARFARE AND SOME OF ITS CONSEQUENCES.

IT has been said that the natives of the innumerable islands of the South Sea are fond of war. All travellers to those regions bear witness to this fact. When Cook went there, the natives of all of them were absolute savages. At the present time a great number of the islands have been blessed with the light of Christianity, but some of them are still lying in the state of degradation in which they were first found.

At this moment, reader, while you ponder these lines, there are men of the South Seas who wander about in a state of nudity and idleness; who practise every species of abomination, and kill, roast, and eat each other, just as they did a hundred years ago.

The eating of human beings, or, as it is called, cannibalism, is no idle tale invented by travellers. Men of the highest character for truth, who have had ample opportunity for

observation, from the time of Cook to the present day, have assured us that the natives of those lovely regions are cannibals. That they not only eat the bodies of enemies slain in war, but even kill and eat their own slaves. Of this you shall hear more anon; meanwhile, let us turn aside to see how these savage warriors go forth to battle.

When it has been decided that they shall go to war, the natives of the South-sea islands commence their preparations with human sacrifices to the god of war. After many strange, bloody, and superstitious rites, the warriors arm themselves and prepare for the fight.

Their weapons, which they use with great dexterity, are slings for throwing heavy stones, pikes headed with the bones of sting-rays, and clubs about six or seven feet long, made of a very hard and heavy wood. In some instances these are richly carved. The chief of each district leads his own subjects to the field, and reports the number of his men to the leading chief. When all are assembled they sally forth. If the fight is to take place on land, it is sometimes begun by the celebrated warriors of each army marching to the front of their respectives lines, and sitting down on the ground. Several of these then step forward, and boastfully challenge each other to combat.

The challenge is usually accepted at once, and after taunting each other for some time, they engage in furious battle. When one falls, a man from his side rises and steps forward to fill his place and continue the fight. If either party gives way, then the main body of the army to which it belongs rushes forward to its support. The opposing army of course springs forward to meet them, and thus the fight becomes general. The main bodies advance in ranks four deep. In the first rank are the bravest men armed with spears; in the second rank, they are armed with clubs to defend the spearmen. The third row consists of young men with slings, and the fourth is composed of women who carry baskets of stones for the slingers, and clubs and spears for the other combatants.

There is no science displayed in their mode of fighting. The opposing armies rush upon each other with terrible fury, dealing deadly blows and thrusts with their murderous weapons. The din and clamour of the fray is increased by a class of men whose duty it is to animate the troops by voice and gesture. These may be styled the orators of battle, and are usually men of commanding stature and well-tried courage. They mingle in the thickest of the fight; hurry to and fro, cheering the men with the passionate recital of heroic

deeds, and, in every possible way, rousing their courage and urging them on to deeds of valour. Pressing through the host with flashing eyes and thundering voice, they shout such abrupt sentences as the following—"Roll onward like the billows! Break on them with the ocean's foam and roar when bursting on the reefs! Hang on them as the forked lightning plays above the frothing surf! Give out the vigilance; give out the anger—the anger of the devouring wild dog—till their line is broken; till they flow back like the receding tide"! Amid such cries, mingled with the shouts of maddened combatants, and the yells of stricken men, the fight goes on. They use no shields. Believing that the gods direct their weapons, they make no attempt to guard, but lay about them with blind fury. Blows do not often require to be repeated. Skulls are cleft or battered in; and hearts are pierced with one blow or thrust, and, when noted warriors fall on either side, shouts of triumph echo along the line and strike a panic through the enemy's ranks.

The first wounded man who can be seized before being quite dead is offered in sacrifice by his foes. He is not taken to their temple for that purpose, but his head is bound round with sacred cinet brought from the temple, and he is then laid alive on a number of

spears and borne on men's shoulders along the ranks, the priest of the god of war walking alongside and watching the writhings of the dying man. If a tear falls from his eye it is said he is weeping for his land. If he should clench his fist it is supposed to be a sign that his party will resist to the last.

If a great chief falls, the party to which he belongs retires a short distance, collects some of the bravest men, and then rushes with incredible fury and yells of vengeance upon the foe to "clear away the blood." The shock is terrific when the contending parties meet, and numbers usually fall on both sides.

During the battle the armies sometimes separate a little distance for a time, leaving a space between them, then the slingers of stones advance. The most expert of these slingers are renowned warriors, and when they are recognised a shout arises from the opposite ranks, "Beware! a powerful stone is such an one." At short range the stones about the size of a hen's egg are thrown straight at the enemy with such force that it is almost impossible to avoid them, so that they do much execution. But soon again the lines close and the fight is renewed hand to hand.

At length one of the lines begins to waver. Seeing this the others are encouraged to renewed efforts, their enemies at last break and

fly, and then a scene of terrible carnage follows. The vanquished rush to their canoes, or fly to the strongholds of the mountains. The victors continue the pursuit, slaughtering men and women indiscriminately. A fallen warrior perchance cries for mercy, "Spare me! may I live?" says he. If the name of his conqueror's chief or king is invoked, the request is sometimes granted; if not, the only reply is a taunt, followed by a thrust or a deadly blow. Thus the scene of murder and blood goes on until the fugitives have reached their strongholds, or until the shades of evening put an end to the pursuit.

Such were the scenes that took place in the days of Captain Cook, and such or similar scenes still occur frequently at the present time on the coral isles of the Pacific.

When their wars are conducted on the sea, the islanders embark in war-canoes, which are so large as to be able to carry from sixty to eighty and even a hundred men. Captain Cook tells us that the ingenuity of these people appears in nothing more than in their canoes. They are long and narrow. One that he measured was sixty-eight feet and a half long, five feet broad, and three feet and a half deep. The bottom was sharp, with straight sides like a wedge. Each side consisted of one entire plank sixty-three feet long, ten or twelve inches

broad, and an inch and a quarter thick. The bottom part of the canoe was hollowed out and these planks were lashed to it with strong plaiting. A grotesque ornament projected six feet beyond the head, and it had a sort of stern-post that rose to a height of about fourteen feet. Both the head and stern-post were beautifully carved, and the canoe was propelled by means of short paddles, the men sitting with their faces in the direction in which they were going. The heads of many of the canoes were curious, in some cases it was the figure of a man with a face as ugly as can well be conceived, with a monstrous tongue thrust out of the mouth, and white shells stuck in for eyes.

In such canoes they went forth to war upon the water, and their sea-fights were not less sanguinary than those of the land. In one battle that was fought between the people of Huahine and those of Raiatea immense slaughter took place. The fleet of one side consisted of ninety war-canoes, each about a hundred feet long, and filled with men. They met near a place called Hooroto, when a most obstinate and bloody engagement ensued. Both parties lost so many men that, when piled up on the day after the battle, the dead bodies formed a heap "as high as the young cocoa-nut trees."

The captives taken in these wars were usually

murdered on the spot, unless reserved for slaves to their conquerors.

One of the results of these sanguinary fights is the existence of a number of what may be called wild men in the mountains of the islands. Ellis, in his *Polynesian Researches*, tells us that he once saw one of these men who had been caught in the mountains, and was at that time comparatively tame, yet his appearance was very remarkable. He was about the middle size, large boned, but not fleshy. His features and countenance were strongly marked. His complexion was dark, and his aspect agitated and wild. His beard was long, and the hair of his head upwards of a foot and a half in length. It was parted on his forehead, but was matted and dishevelled. The colour of his hair was singular. At the roots it was black, six inches from his head it was light brown, and the extremities were light yellow. He was quite naked, with the exception of a *maro* or girdle round the loins. This poor creature had been driven to the mountains in time of war, and had remained in solitude for many years. Probably extreme terror had affected his mind, for he was gloomy, and seemed to take no interest in anything going on around him. Evidently those "wild men" were poor creatures whose misfortunes had driven them mad.

One of them was captured on another occa-

sion by a party which had gone into the mountains to collect the bark of a certain tree which is used for dyeing cloth. On their way they perceived a man lying asleep on the ground. They surrounded him with as little noise as possible, but when they approached he awoke. Leaping up, he flung his wild locks over his shoulders and gazed at them with a startled look, then he darted into the woods, where he was caught by one of the men and secured. Had he not been enfeebled from recent illness, they could neither have caught nor retained this man.

On being taken he exhibited signs of extreme terror. It was in vain that his captors assured him they meant him no harm; he continued to exclaim, "Ye are murderers, ye are murderers! do not murder me, do not murder me!" Even after he had been taken to the settlement and treated with great kindness, he could not be prevailed on to say anything more than "Do not kill me," and did not rest until he had made his escape into the woods!

CHAPTER IX.

TOUCHES ON CANNIBALISM.

THE cruelties inflicted on the wretched prisoners taken in these wars were inconceivably horrible and disgusting. Some of our readers may, perhaps, think we might have passed over the sickening details in silence, but we feel strongly that it is better that truth should be known than that the feelings of the sensitive should be spared.

Ellis tells us that the bodies of men slain in battle were usually left to be devoured by the hogs and wild dogs. This was doubtless the case in some of the groups of islands where cannibalism was perhaps not very much practised, but in other groups—especially among those known by the name of the Feejees—the slain were more frequently devoured by men and women than by hogs or dogs. The victors used to carry off the lower jaw-bones of the most distinguished among the slain as trophies, and also the bones of the arms and legs, from which they formed tools of various kinds and fish-

hooks, and the skulls they converted into drinking-cups. The dead bodies were sometimes laid in rows along the beach, and used as rollers, over which the canoes were launched.

One of their practices with the dead was ludicrously horrible. Sometimes, when a man had slain his enemy, in order to gratify his revenge, he would beat the body quite flat, and then, cutting a hole through the back and stomach, would pass his head through it and actually rush into the fight wearing the body round his neck, with the head and arms hanging down in front, and the legs behind!

The bodies of celebrated warriors and chiefs were hung by a rope to a tree, after the legs and arms had been broken; cords were attached to their feet, and then they were drawn up and down for the amusement of the spectators, while other dead bodies were beaten as drums, to make a hideous music to this horrible dance.

Other brutalities were practised upon the slain, which were of such a nature that decency forbids our doing more than merely alluding to them here. In order to show that many of the savages of the South Seas were as bad, only a few years ago, as they were in former times, we give the following account of a scene which is published and vouched for in a recent work, named the *Journal of a Cruise among the*

Islands of the Western Pacific, by Captain Erskine of the Royal Navy :—

About twenty years ago Bonavidongo, one of the chiefs of the Feejee islands, paid a visit to another chief named Tuithakau, for the purpose of asking his assistance in quelling a disturbance that had arisen in a neighbouring island. The latter agreed; all the warriors of the island and the surrounding district were gathered together, and an army of two thousand men finally set forth on this expedition in forty war-canoes.

Among the people was an English sailor named Jackson. He was of a roving disposition; had been kidnapped at one of the islands, from which he escaped, and afterwards wandered for two years among the South-sea Islands—learned the language of the natives, and wrote an account of his adventures, which Captain Erskine added to his volume in the form of an appendix.

Not being able to carry provisions for so large a body of men for any length of time, the Feejeeans made a short stay at a place called Rambe, for the purpose of refreshing the people. Here they procured immense quantities of yams and crabs, with which, after eating and drinking to their hearts' content, they loaded the canoes and continued the voyage. From Rambe, as well as from other

places along the route, they were joined by additional canoes and warriors, so that their numbers rapidly increased. Frequently they were obliged to sleep in the canoes instead of on shore, on which occasions they were jammed up in such a manner from want of space as to be actually lying in layers on the top of each other!

At one place where they called they could not obtain a sufficient supply of provisions for the whole party on account of its being small and containing but few inhabitants, so they made up the deficiency with dogs, cats, snakes, lizards, and the large white grubs with black heads that are found in decayed wood. The dogs and cats they knocked on the head, more for the purpose of stunning than killing, and threw them on a fire, and, after letting them lie five minutes or so on one side, turned them over on the other, then drew them from the fire and devoured them. The grubs they ate raw.

Jackson was much surprised at what he terms "this beastly way of feeding," because in his previous experience he had found the Feejeeans to be extremely particular in all preparations of food. On inquiring the cause of the change, however, he was informed "that they felt proud that they were able to endure such hard fare, and that it was essential to

their warlike customs, as they could not expect to sleep as well in war-time as in peace, and that they must endure every inconvenience, and pay no attention whatever to comfort!"

At length they arrived at the island of Mouta, where they landed to announce their arrival to the king, and to present him with a gift of whales' teeth, which are much prized, and used on nearly all such occasions. In order to reach the town they had to proceed up a long, serpentine, narrow river, each bank of which was so thickly covered with mangrove trees that they over-shadowed it completely—rendering it exceedingly dark and dismal. In the middle of the town stood the king's house, and directly opposite was the "bure," or temple. The whole town contained about one hundred and fifty houses.

Having presented the whales' teeth to his savage majesty, they related all that had happened on the voyage, detailing the minutest particulars, after which they went to the temple to do honour to the god of war; and here the story of the voyage was repeated to the priest, who replied in a long speech. This speech was listened to with the deepest attention, because it was considered prophetic. The priest finished off by encouraging all present to be obedient to the god of war, and to do their best to gratify his appetite, adding, that the

success of the whole expedition depended on their obedience. He reminded them that the god was a great lover of animal food, especially of human flesh. Jackson afterwards found that the appetite of the priest was quite as peculiar and strong as that of the god, in this respect, and that the king was a greater cannibal than the priest!

Next morning they re-embarked and started for Male, in the disturbed district. The inhabitants of Male lived on the top of a mountain shaped like a sugar-loaf, and having only one path leading up it. At the top this path could be easily defended by a small body of men against ten times their number, as they could roll down large stones upon their enemies while they approached. Knowing the strength of their position, the natives of this place had become the pest of the neighbourhood. They sallied forth and committed great depredations on the villages near them—carrying away the women into slavery, and killing the men for food!

On approaching the place the war-party saw that the natives, by their antics, were challenging and defying them. When they landed and could hear what they said, they made out their speech of defiance to be, "We are extremely tired of waiting for you, especially as we have been expecting this visit so

long; but as you have at last made your appearance, we are quite ready to begin at once. We would remind you, at the same, that we are well supplied with stones, and, if these fail, we have also a good store of British sand (gunpowder), and plenty of pills (musket-balls), which we will bestow upon you very generously. We see that you have got the Feejees and Tongas with you, but we hope you will not have the folly and impudence to attack us until you have collected the whole world to help you!"

To this contemptuous speech the war-party made a somewhat similar reply. After they had thus abused each other for some time, three of the people of the hill ventured halfway down the path, where they stood and dared any, or the whole, of their enemies to come up. As it was not, however, the intention of the war-party to assault the stronghold at that time, they declined the invitation, but, happening to possess several old muskets, which they had procured, no doubt, from traders, they fired a volley at the three challengers, killed them all on the spot, and, rushing up, caught the bodies as they rolled down the path.

The corpses were then fastened to a pole in a sitting posture, and placed in the canoe of the chief, who resumed his voyage, his warriors

singing out "Satiko, satiko" (good-bye, good-bye), and telling the people of Male that they would call again upon them shortly, as their place was so conveniently situated, and take a few more bodies, just enough at a time for the priest of the god of war—in short, that they would take them in the same way as a man kills his pigs; and they were to be sure to feed themselves well, for their chief was fond of fat meat!

With this supply of food they returned to Mouta. Here the bodies, which had been carefully painted with vermillion and soot, were handed out and placed, sitting up, in front of the king's house; but before proceeding to their loathsome banquet, they enacted scenes in which there was a dreadful mingling of the ludicrous and the horrible.

The whole of the people being assembled, and dead silence secured, an old man advanced to the bodies, and, laying his hand upon each, began talking to it in a low tone, asking it "why he had been so rash in coming down the hill," and telling it "that he was extremely sorry to see him in such a predicament; and did he not feel ashamed of himself now that he was obliged to encounter the gaze of such a crowd." By degrees the old orator worked himself into a state of excitement, till at last he shouted at the full strength of his

voice, and finally finished off by kicking the bodies down, amid bursts of laughter from the spectators, who then rushed forward, and, seizing each by a leg or an arm, dragged them over stones and dust and swamps for the general amusement of the people.

At last they pulled them up to a place at the back of the town which was used for the purpose of cutting up, cooking, and eating human flesh. In front of this dreadful place lay a heap of human bones bleached by the weather. Here the priest was seated, with his long beard hanging down on a little table before him. On this table were two skulls converted into drinking cups, and several others were lying about the floor.

Without going further into the disgusting details, it may be sufficient to add that the three bodies were cut up by the priest and cooked in an oven heated by means of hot stones, after which they were devoured as a great treat, and with infinite relish, by the king and his chief men.

It was long before people in the civilized world would give credit to stories such as that just related; and even now there may be some who doubt the truth of them. But the number and the characters of the travellers who have visited these islands since the days of Cook, and who have brought home similar

reports, puts the matter beyond question. Men ought neither to doubt these shocking details because they seem incredible, nor turn away from them because they are disgusting. Like the surgeon who calmly and steadily examines the most hideous of wounds or sores that can affect the human body, so ought the Christian and the philanthropist to know and consider in detail the horrible deeds that are done by our fellow-men in the Cannibal Islands. It is good for us to be made acquainted with the truth in order that we may be filled with strong pity for the degraded savages, and in order, also, that our hearts and hands may be opened towards those noble missionaries who venture themselves into the midst of such awful scenes for the sake of souls, and in the name of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER X.

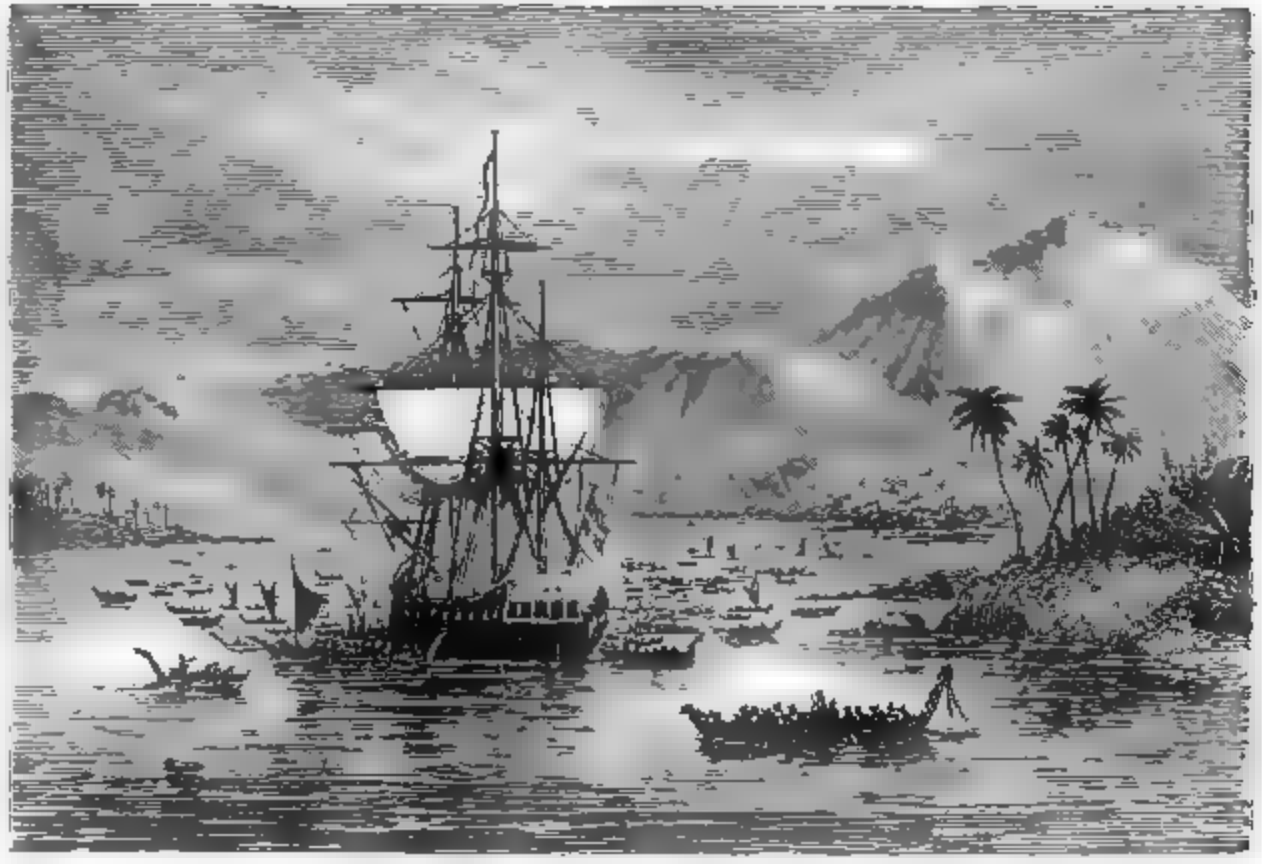
VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND.

CAPTAIN COOK left Tahiti after a stay of three months. During the greater part of this period the sailors and natives had lived together in the most cordial friendship, and in the perpetual interchange of kindly acts. It must be borne in mind that, though the unchristianized natives of the South-sea Islands are all degraded, cruel, and savage, all are not equally so. Those inhabiting the Feejee group are generally reported to be the worst in all respects. Those who inhabited Tahiti, on the other hand, were, at the time of Cook's visit, said to be comparatively amiable.

At all events, the departure of the *Endeavour* called forth a strong display of tender feeling on the part of the natives of that island. In writing of this Cook says—"On the next morning, Thursday, the 13th July, the ship was very early crowded with our friends, and surrounded by multitudes of canoes, which

were filled with natives of an inferior class. Between eleven and twelve we weighed anchor, and as soon as the ship was under sail the Indians on board took their leave, and wept with a decent and silent sorrow, in which there was something very striking and tender. The people in the canoes, on the contrary, seemed to vie with each other in the loudness of their lamentations, which we considered rather as an affectation than grief. Tupia (a chief who had made up his mind to sail with us) sustained himself in this scene with a firmness and resolution truly admirable. He wept, indeed, but the effort that he made to conceal his tears concurred with them to do him honour. He sent his last present, a shirt, to a friend on shore, and then went to the masthead, where he continued waving to the canoes as long as they were in sight."

Thus ended the visit of the great navigator to Tahiti, an island which afterwards became the scene of one of the most romantic incidents that was ever recorded in the annals of maritime adventure, namely, the mutiny of the men in H. M. S. Bounty, and the consequent colonization of Pitcairn Island. Tahiti is now civilized, and under the protective government of the French. The produce of the Island is bread-fruit, cocoa-nuts, bananas of thirteen sorts, plantains, a fruit not unlike an apple,



Cook leaving Tahiti.

which, when ripe, is very pleasant, sweet potatoes, yams, sugar-cane, which the natives eat raw, besides many other kinds of fruits, roots, and vegetables, all of which grew wild when Cook was there, or with so little culture that the islanders are almost altogether exempted from labour.

Setting sail from Tahiti, the *Endeavour* visited several other isles, and at length arrived at the celebrated island of New Zealand. This is one of the largest in the South Seas, and is now the site of several thriving British settlements. Flourishing cities have been built on its rich soil; large portions of it have been brought under cultivation; gold mines have been discovered; churches and schools have been erected, and many of the natives have become partially civilized.

Very different indeed was the state of things when Captain Cook first drew near to its shores in the year 1769.

He cast anchor on the 8th of October in a bay near the mouth of a small river about half a league from shore. The sides of the bay were white cliffs of great height, and inland the hills rose one behind another, towering upwards until they terminated in a chain of mountains in the far distance. Some natives had been seen on the beach, so, when the ship was secured, Cook took two of his boats, and,

accompanied by Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander with a party of men, went on shore. They landed on the east side of the river, but finding it too deep to cross, and seeing some natives on the other side, they took one of the boats—the yawl—and went over, leaving the other boat—the pinnace—behind them.

When the navigators drew near to the place where the natives were assembled, the latter ran away. The sailors then landed, and, leaving four boys in charge of the boat, walked up to some huts which were two or three hundred yards from the beach. But they had not gone far from the water side when four men, armed with long lances, rushed out of the woods, and ran to attack the boat. They would certainly have succeeded in overpowering the four boys and making off with the boat, had they not fortunately been seen by the people left in the pinnace, who called out to warn the boys of their danger, telling them to push off and drop down stream. The boys obeyed instantly. Being closely pursued by the savages, one of them fired a musket over their heads.

At this they stopped in surprise and looked round them, but in a few minutes renewed the pursuit, brandishing their lances in a threatening manner, as if about to cast them into the boat, which they could easily have done. The

boys then fired a second shot over their heads, but of this they took no notice, and one of them lifted his spear with the intention of darting it; another musket was therefore fired, which shot the savage dead. When he fell the other three stood motionless for some time as if petrified with astonishment. As soon as they recovered they went back to the woods, dragging the dead body, but they soon dropt it and fled when they saw Cook and his companions running to the rescue.

The dead body was examined, and found to be that of a man of middle size, with brown complexion and a tatooed face. He was covered with a kind of native cloth, and wore his hair tied up in a knot on the top of his head. Cook immediately returned to the ship, from the deck of which he could hear the voices of the natives on shore talking with great earnestness and in a very loud tone.

Being anxious to enter into friendly intercourse with these people, Cook renewed the attempt next morning. He ordered three boats to be manned with seamen and marines, and proceeded towards the shore, accompanied by Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, also by Tupia, the Tahitan, to act as interpreter. About fifty natives came to the beach and sat down to await their landing. In order to prevent them taking fright, Cook landed first and

advanced accompanied only by the two gentlemen above named and Tupia. But they had not proceeded many paces before the savages started up, and every man produced either a long pike or a small weapon of green talc extremely well polished, about a foot long, and thick enough to weigh four or five pounds. Tupia endeavoured to appease them, but this could not be managed until a musket was fired wide of them. The ball struck the water, and on observing its effect they ceased their menaces.

Meanwhile the marines were landed and marched to a commanding position, where they were drawn up, while Captain Cook again advanced. When they came near enough, Tupia explained that they wanted provisions and water, for which they would give iron in exchange. He then asked them to lay down their arms, but they would not consent to do so. The river still lay between the two parties, and Cook invited the natives to come over and trade. They were unwilling at first, but in a short time one, bolder than the rest, stripped himself and swam over without his arms. He was immediately followed by two or three more, and soon after by most of the others. These last, however, brought their arms with them.

Presents of iron and beads were now made

to the savages, but they seemed to care little for these things, and in a few minutes they attempted to snatch the arms out of the sailors' hands. In this they failed, and Cook ordered Tupia to tell them that if they tried to do that again, he would be compelled to kill them. In a few minutes Mr. Green, one of the gentlemen, happened to turn about; immediately one of them snatched away his sword and ran to a little distance, waving it round his head with a shout of triumph. Seeing this, the rest became extremely insolent, and more savages came to join them from the other side of the river. It therefore became necessary to check them, and Mr. Banks fired with small shot at the man who had taken the sword. The shot had only the effect of stopping his shouts and causing him to retire a little farther off, still flourishing the sword, however. Seeing this, Mr. Monkhouse fired with ball, and the man dropt instantly. Upon this the main body of the natives, who had retired to a rock in the middle of the river, began to return. Two that were near the man who had been killed ran to the body, and one seized his weapon of green talc, while the other tried to secure the sword, but Mr. Monkhouse ran up in time to prevent this. Three muskets loaded with small shot were then fired at the party, which wounded several and caused them to retire to

the opposite side of the river, after which Cook returned to the ship.

This was a matter of great disappointment to the voyagers, because they were much in want of fresh water. Cook now resolved to seize some of the natives if possible and prove to them, by kind treatment, that they had nothing to fear. Soon after he had an opportunity of trying this plan. Two canoes were seen coming in from sea; one under sail; the other worked by paddles. Taking three boats full of men he gave chase to them; but the people in the nearest canoe perceived them, and turning aside made with all possible haste for a point of land and escaped. The other canoe was intercepted, and Tupia called to them to come alongside and they would receive no harm; but they took down the sail, took to their paddles and made off so quickly that the boats could not overtake them. Cook then ordered a musket ball to be fired over them. On hearing the shots they stopped paddling and began to strip, intending, no doubt, to leap into the sea. But they quickly changed their minds and resolved not to fly but to fight. When the boats came up they began the attack with their paddles and with stones so vigorously, that the voyagers were obliged to fire at them in self-defence. Unhappily four were killed and the three who remained leaped into the sea.

These were soon captured, and were found to be mere boys—the eldest about nineteen, and the youngest about eleven. Cook deeply regretted this unfortunate affair, and blamed himself for it, but remarked, in justification of himself, that "when the command has once been given to fire, no man can restrain its excess or prescribe its effect."

As soon as the poor wretches were taken out of the water into the boat, they squatted down, expecting, no doubt, to be instantly put to death. But when they found that instead of being killed, they were treated with kindness, they became exceedingly joyful. On reaching the ship they were offered some bread, which they devoured with a voracious appetite. They asked and answered a great many questions, and when the people sat down to dinner expressed a desire to touch and taste everything they saw. The food that pleased them most was salt pork. At night they made a hearty supper, and after they had each drunk above a quart of water, they lay down to sleep on a locker well pleased with their treatment.

During the night, however, their true condition as prisoners seemed to be impressed on them. Possibly they thought of their slain friends, for they began to moan dismally, and it was all Tupia could do to comfort them. Next morning they devoured an enormous

breakfast, after which they were dressed, and adorned with bracelets, anklets, necklaces, etc., and sent on shore in the hope that they might carry a good report of the strangers to their friends. Nothing came of this, however, at the time. The natives still remained unfriendly, and Cook finally weighed anchor and set sail in search of a part of the coast where the people, it was hoped, would be more hospitable.

Soon after this a number of canoes came off to the ship, and the natives, to the number of fifty, came on board without fear, saying that they had heard such an account of the kindness of the sailors from the three boys, that they had come to trade with them. And they did trade with them, to such an extent that they parted with everything they had, even stripping off their clothes, and offering them in exchange for trinkets of little value!

About an hour before sunset, the canoes put off from the ship to return to shore, and then it was discovered that three natives had been left behind. Tupia hailed the canoes and told them of this, but they would not return, and what seemed more surprising, the three savages did not seem to care, but remained on board eating and drinking, and entertaining the ship's company with dancing and singing of a very remarkable kind, after which they had their suppers and went quietly to bed. But

they were dreadfully horrified on awaking next morning to find that the ship was sailing swiftly away with them; and they remained in a state of consternation until a canoe happened to put off from shore, and after much persuasion came alongside and took them away. The men in the canoe were very timid about coming on deck, and they could not be got to do so until the three savages assured them that the white people "did not eat men!"

Cook then continued his voyage of discovery round New Zealand, making careful notes of the coast, and naming the various headlands as he went. As the island is fully as large as Great Britain, it took him some time to accomplish the survey. He had many adventures, and saw many strange things by the way, besides running considerable danger from the natives, who showed themselves extremely hostile.

On one occasion, while they were entangled among some shoals, the hurry on board in working the ship led the savages to suppose the voyagers were alarmed, so taking advantage of this, four large canoes full of armed men put off and came towards them with the intention, apparently, of making an attack. A musket was fired over them, but as it did no harm they continued to come on. A four-pounder, loaded with grape, was then fired a

little to one side of them. This caused them all to start up with a shout of surprise, after which they returned quietly to the shore.

On all occasions Captain Cook exerted himself to the utmost to prevent bloodshed; but the natives were everywhere so warlike and treacherous, that this could not always be avoided.

One day several canoes full of armed men came alongside, and were induced to trade—exchanging native cloth and arms for the usual trinkets. Tupia, the interpreter, had a little son with him named Tayeto. This little fellow was employed to stand outside the bulwarks of the ship to hand down the things from the ship to the savages in the canoes. One of these rascals, watching his opportunity, suddenly seized the lad and dragged him down into the canoe. Two of them held him down in the fore part of it, and the others with great activity, paddled off—the rest of the canoes following as fast as they could.

Upon this the marines were ordered to fire. The shot was directed to that part of the canoe which was farthest from the boy. One man dropped, upon which the others quitted their hold of the boy, who sprang nimbly into the water and swam towards the ship. A large canoe turned to re-capture him, but some muskets and a great gun being fired at it, the

rowers desisted from farther pursuit. The ship was immediately brought to, a boat was lowered, and poor Tayeto was picked up, very much terrified, but unhurt, and none the worse for his adventure.

After this the discoverers had the most convincing proof that the inhabitants of New Zealand were cannibals. One day Mr. Banks, Dr. Solander, Tupia, and others, went ashore and visited a party of natives who appeared to have just concluded a repast. The body of a dog was found buried in their oven, and many provision baskets stood around. In one of these they observed two bones, pretty cleanly picked, which did not seem to be the bones of a dog. On nearer inspection they were found to be those of a human being. That the flesh belonging to them had been eaten was evident, for that which remained had manifestly been dressed by fire, and in the gristles at the ends were the marks of the teeth which had gnawed them. To put an end to doubt, Tupia asked what bones they were, and the natives answered without the least hesitation that they were the bones of a man, and they had eaten the flesh of them. Upon one of the visitors pretending not to believe this, and saying that they were the bones of a dog, a native seized his own forearm with his teeth and made a show of eating it with great relish. He also took one

of the bones which Mr. Banks held in his hand and bit and gnawed it, drawing it through his lips, and showing by signs that it afforded a delicious repast!

As if to relieve, somewhat, the feelings of disgust with which they were oppressed by such sights, the voyagers were regaled with the most delicious music on the following morning. About two o'clock they were awakened by the sweet singing of birds, the number of which was incredible, and their energy so great that they appeared to strain their throats in emulation of each other. This wild melody was infinitely superior to anything they had ever heard of the same kind; it seemed to be like small bells most exquisitely tuned;—perhaps the distance of the ship from shore, and the water between, may have lent additional charms to the sound.

Ere long the birds ceased to sing, and the disagreeable subject of the previous day was recalled by the appearance of a small canoe, in which was an old man, who, on coming on deck, at once revived the conversation about eating human flesh.

"But," said Tupia, after some minutes' talk, "I did not see any heads of your enemies; what do you do with them? do you not eat them too?"

"No," replied the old man, "we only eat

the brains, and the next time I come I will bring off some of them to convince you that what I have told you is true."

That same day some of the sailors found on shore, near an oven, three human hip-bones, which they brought on board, and Mr. Monkhouse, the surgeon, discovered and took on board the hair of a man's head.

Here also they saw practised a remarkably simple and ingenious method of catching fish, which we think might be tried with advantage on our own coasts. Happening to observe a man in his canoe fishing, they rowed alongside and asked him to draw up his line, which he readily did. At the end of it they found a net of a circular form, extended by two hoops about seven or eight feet in diameter. The top was open, and sea-ears were fastened to the bottom as bait. This he let down so as to lie upon the ground until he thought fish enough had assembled over it. Then he drew it up by an extremely gentle and even motion, so that the fish rose with it, scarcely sensible (it is supposed) that they were being lifted, until near the surface of the water, when they were brought out in the net by a sudden pull!

The ingenuity of the New Zealanders appeared in nothing more than in their canoes, of which the following description is in Cook's own words:—

"They are long and narrow, and in shape very much resemble a New England whale-boat; the larger sort seem to be built chiefly for war, and will carry from forty to eighty or a hundred armed men. We measured one which lay ashore at Tolago. She was sixty-eight feet and a half long, five feet broad, and three feet and a half deep. The bottom was sharp, with straight sides like a wedge, and consisted of three lengths hollowed out to about two inches, or an inch and a half thick, and well fastened together with strong plaiting. Each side consisted of one entire plank, sixty-three feet long, ten or twelve inches broad, and about an inch and a quarter thick, and these were fitted and lashed to the bottom part with great dexterity and strength. A considerable number of thwarts were laid from gunwale to gunwale, to which they were securely lashed on each side, as a strengthening to the boat. The ornament at the head projected five or six feet beyond the body, and was about four feet and a half high. The ornament at the stern was fixed upon that end as the sternpost of a ship is fixed upon its keel, and was about fourteen feet high, two feet broad, and an inch and a half thick. They both consisted of boards of carved work, of which the design was much better than the execution."

The smaller canoes, which were of one piece,

hollowed out by fire, usually had "outriggers," —boards projecting from, and parallel to, the canoes—to prevent their overturning, and occasionally two canoes were joined together for the same purpose, as, if unsupported, they were extremely liable to upset.

The tools with which these canoes and their other implements and utensils were made consisted of axes and adzes made of a hard black stone, or of a green talc, which latter stone is not only hard but tough. They had chisels made of small fragments of jasper, and of human bones. These also served the purpose of augers for boring holes. Fish-hooks were of bone or shell; these, however, were not well made, but in the fabrication of most of their implements, canoes, war-clubs, baskets, etc., they displayed a considerable degree of taste, neatness of hand, and ingenuity.

Our space forbids us following Captain Cook very closely in his many voyages throughout the great archipelago of the South Seas. In this volume we have touched but lightly here and there on the immense variety of subjects which came under his observation. Those who wish for fuller information will find it in the work entitled "The Voyages of Captain Cook round the World," which contains his own most interesting journals.

Passing over the years which intervene

between the period of which we have been writing and the last voyage he ever made to the islands of the South Seas, we leap at once, in the next chapter, to the sad closing scenes of the great navigator's career.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LAST VOYAGE AND SAD END OF THE GREAT DISCOVERER.

IN the spring of 1776, Captain Cook set sail on his last voyage, in command of the *Resolution*, accompanied by the *Discovery* under Captain Clerke, an able officer, who had been Cook's second Lieutenant on board the *Resolution* in his second voyage round the world.

The expedition was well supplied with everything that might conduce to its success, or to the comfort of those engaged in it, and many useful articles were put on board to be given to the South-sea Islanders, with a view to improve their condition—among other things, some live stock, which, it was hoped, would multiply on the islands—such as a bull, and two cows with their calves, and some sheep; besides a quantity of such European garden seeds as were likely to thrive in those regions.

It says much for the perseverance and energy of Captain Cook that, although his education had been so defective that he only began to study Euclid and Astronomy at the age of

thirty-one, he was nevertheless competent to conduct, without the aid of a scientific man, the astronomical department of this voyage.

The vessels touched at the Cape of Good Hope in passing, and sailed thence on their voyage of discovery, which extended over three years, during which period they visited Van Diemen's Land, on the south of Australia, New Zealand, the Society Islands, Sandwich Islands, and other groups of the Pacific; also the western and northern coasts of North America, and saw new and beautiful regions, as well as strange and wonderful—in some cases terrible—sights, the mere enumeration of which, without going into detail, would fill many pages. We hasten, therefore, to that point in the narrative which describes the visit of the expedition to the island of Owhyhee, where its heroic commander terminated his brilliant career.

On January 1779 the *Resolution* and the *Discovery* put into a large bay named Karakakooa on the west of the island, for the purpose of refitting the ships and laying in an additional supply of water and provisions. They moored on the north side of the bay, about quarter of a mile from the shore. Here they were well received by the inhabitants, who at first were extremely hospitable. Captain King, in his journal of the transactions at this place, writes:—

"As soon as the inhabitants perceived our intention of anchoring in the bay, they came off in astonishing numbers, and expressed their joy by singing and shouting, and exhibiting a variety of wild and extravagant gestures. The sides, the decks, and rigging of both ships were soon completely covered with them, and a multitude of women and boys, who had not been able to get canoes, came swimming round us in shoals; many of them not finding room on board, remained the whole day playing in the water!"

Afterwards Captain Cook went ashore and was received with many extraordinary ceremonies, which bore a strong resemblance to religious worship, but in regard to this he and his companions could only form conjectures, and were very glad to find that their entertainers were so friendly. Next morning Captain King went ashore with a guard of eight marines to erect an observatory in such a situation as might best enable him to superintend and protect the waterers and other working parties that were to be on shore. The spot chosen was immediately marked off with wands by the friendly native priests, who thus consecrated the ground, or placed it under "taboo"—a sort of religious interdiction, which effectually protected it from the intrusion of the natives—for none ever ventured, during their stay, to enter within the *tabooed* space without permission.

Very different was it on board the ships. These, not being tabooed, were overwhelmed with visitors, particularly women, who flocked on board in such numbers that the men were obliged to clear the decks almost every hour in order to have room to attend to their duties—on which occasions two or three hundred women were frequently made to jump into the water at once, where they continued swimming and playing about until they could again obtain admittance!

While, however, the priests of the island were very attentive to their visitors—sending them gifts of pigs and vegetables with extreme liberality, and expecting nothing in return, the warrior chiefs were not so disinterested. They expected and received many gifts, and they were so much addicted to theft that a constant watch had to be kept upon them, while examples had occasionally to be made of those who were caught in the act. Soon after their arrival, the ships were visited in state by the King of the island, whose name was Terreeoboo. Some of his chiefs accompanied him, and all of them were dressed in rich feathered cloaks and helmets, and armed with long spears and daggers. Along with them they brought their idols, which were gigantic busts made of wicker-work, curiously covered with small feathers. Their eyes were made of

large pearl oysters, with a black nut fixed in the centre of each; double rows of dogs' teeth ornamented their mouths, and their features were strangely distorted. The King and his friends were hospitably received. Presents were made, and expressions of good-will and friendship interchanged.

Thus everything went on prosperously. The refitting and provisioning were completed; games and ceremonies were witnessed; and finally the ships left the island with the good wishes of a people who had treated their visitors with singular kindness and hospitality during the whole period of their sojourn.

Unfortunately, soon afterwards, the *Resolution* was so much damaged in a gale, that it was found necessary to return to Karakakooa Bay for repairs. To the surprise of the voyagers their reception on this occasion was very different from what it had been at first. There was no shouting, no bustle, no coming off in shoals—only here and there a canoe was seen stealing along the solitary shore. On inquiry, they were told that King Terreeoboo was absent, and had laid the bay under taboo! This looked very suspicious. However, as there was no help for it, they landed their men with the foremast of one of the ships, which required repair, and for two or three days pushed forward their work busily, expecting that when

the king returned and removed the interdict, the natives would flock round them with the same good feeling as before.

Things went on in their usual quiet way till the afternoon of the 13th of February. On the evening of that day the watering party was interfered with by natives who had armed themselves with stones, and were becoming very insolent. On the appearance, however, of Captain King with one of the marines, they threw away the stones, and some of the chiefs drove the mob away. Captain Cook, on hearing of this, ordered the sentinels to load with ball, and to fire if the interference should be repeated. Soon after that the party on shore were alarmed by a fire of musketry from the *Discovery*. It was directed at a small canoe which was paddling to the shore in great haste, pursued by one of the ship's boats. The canoe reached the shore first, and the natives, who had been stealing, made their escape. Captain Cook and Captain King pursued them into the woods for about three miles, but failed to overtake them.

During Cook's absence a serious difference occurred on the shore. One of the officers conceived it to be his duty to seize one of the native canoes. This chanced to belong to a great man named Pareea, who soon afterwards claimed his property. The officer refused to give it

up, and a scuffle ensued, in which Pareea was knocked on the head with an oar. The natives immediately attacked the sailors with a shower of stones, which compelled them to retreat precipitately into the sea and swim off to a rock at some distance from the shore, leaving the pinnace in the hands of the natives, who at once ransacked it. They would probably have demolished it entirely had not Pareea, who soon recovered from his blow, come forward, and, with an admirable spirit of forgiveness, rescued it from their hands, returned it to the sailors, and afterwards rubbed noses with the officer who caused all the mischief, in token of his reconciliation!

During that night the cutter of the *Discovery* was stolen, and next morning Captain Cook, landing with nine marines, went up to the village. It had been his usual practice, whenever anything of importance was lost at any of the islands in that ocean, to get the king or some of the chief men on board, and keep them as hostages until the missing article should be restored. This method, which had been always attended with success, he meant to pursue on the present occasion. Meanwhile, the boats of both ships were ordered out, and well manned and armed.

Captain Cook then marched into the village, where he was received with the usual marks of

respect—the people prostrating themselves before him, and bringing him their accustomed offerings of small hogs.

We cannot help remarking here that Cook was to be blamed for permitting the natives to treat him with a degree of ceremonious solemnity which was obviously meant as an act of worship. The only thing that can be said in his defence, we think, is, that in a region where many remarkable, and to him incomprehensible, customs prevailed, he could not certainly assure himself that the people were not paying to him the ordinary homage which they were accustomed to pay to every great chief who visited their island.

He found the old king just awaking from sleep, and, after a short conversation about the loss of the cutter, the captain invited him to return in the boat and spend the day on board the *Resolution*. The king readily consented, but while on his way to the beach one of his wives, who evidently suspected treachery, besought him with many tears not to go on board. At the same time, two of his chiefs laid hold of him, and, insisting that he should go no farther, forced him to sit down. The natives had by this time collected in prodigious numbers, and the Englishmen were so surrounded that it would have been impossible for them to use their arms if any occasion had

required it. Captain Cook, therefore, was obliged to give up his efforts to induce the old king to go on board.

As yet the captain had not expected or feared any attempt at personal violence, and it is probable that he would have succeeded in coming off scathless on this occasion, as he had done many a time before, had not an unfortunate incident occurred, which gave a fatal turn to the affair. The boats of the ship, which had been stationed across the bay, fired at some canoes that were attempting to escape, and, unfortunately, killed a chief of the first rank. The news of his death reached the village just as Captain Cook was leaving the king, and the excitement occasioned was very great. One evidence that the natives meant to be revenged was, that all the women and children were immediately sent off, and they made their intentions still more apparent by putting on their war-mats, and arming themselves with spears and stones. Just before this, however, the nine marines had been ordered to extricate themselves from the crowd and line the rocks along the shore.

One of the natives having a stone in one hand, and a long iron spike in the other, came up to the captain in a defiant manner, flourishing his weapon, and threatening to throw the stone. Cook told him to desist, but he per-

sisted in his threatening actions, and at length provoked the captain to fire a charge of small shot into him. Having on his war-mat, however, it had no other effect than to stir up his wrath. Several stones were now thrown at the marines, and a native attempted to stab one of the party with his spear; in this, however, he failed, and was knocked down with the butt-end of a musket.

Captain Cook now felt that the safety of the party depended on prompt, decisive action, for the more he exercised forbearance, the more did the savages threaten. He therefore fired his second barrel, which was loaded with ball, and killed one of the foremost.

A general attack with stones immediately followed. This was met by a discharge of muskets from the marines and the people in the boats. Contrary to expectation, the savages stood the fire with great firmness. From the accounts given of the transaction, it would appear that all the marines had discharged their muskets—none having reserved fire. This was a fatal mistake, because, before they had time to reload, the natives rushed upon them in overwhelming numbers, and with fearful yells. Then followed a scene of indescribable horror and confusion.

Captain King, Cook's intimate friend, says, in regard to this closing scene, that four of the

marines were cut off amongst the rocks in their retreat, and fell a sacrifice to the fury of the enemy; three more were dangerously wounded. The lieutenant, who had received a stab between the shoulders with a *pahooa*, having fortunately reserved his fire, shot the man who had wounded him just as he was going to repeat the blow. The unfortunate Captain Cook, when last seen distinctly, was standing at the water's edge, calling out to the men in the boats to cease firing and to pull in. If it be true, as some of those who were present have imagined, that the marines and boatmen had fired without his orders, and that he was desirous of preventing further bloodshed, it is not improbable that his humanity, on this occasion, proved fatal to him; for it was remarked that while he faced the natives, none of them had offered him any violence, but that, having turned about to give his order to the boats, he was stabbed in the back, and fell with his face into the water.

On seeing him fall, the savages gave a great shout, rushed upon him, and dragged him on shore. They then surrounded him, and, snatching the daggers out of each other's hands, showed a savage eagerness to have a share in his destruction.

"Thus," continues King, "fell our great and excellent commander! After a life of so

much distinguished and successful enterprise, his death, as far as regards himself, cannot be reckoned premature, since he lived to finish the great work for which he seems to have been designed, and was rather removed from the enjoyment, than cut off from the acquisition of glory. How sincerely his loss was felt and lamented by those who had so long found their general security in his skill and conduct, and every consolation under their hardships in his tenderness and humanity, it is neither necessary nor possible for me to describe; much less shall I attempt to paint the horror with which we were struck, and the universal dejection and dismay which followed so dreadful and unexpected a calamity."

In commenting on Captain Cook's services, the same gentleman says:—

"Perhaps no science ever received greater additions from the labours of a single man than geography has done from those of Captain Cook. In his first voyage to the South Seas he discovered the Society Islands; determined the insularity of New Zealand, discovered the Straits which separate the two islands, and are called after his name, and made a complete survey of both. He afterwards explored the eastern coast of New Holland, hitherto unknown, to an extent of twenty-seven degrees of latitude, or upwards of two thousand miles."

In succeeding years he settled the disputed point of the existence of a great southern continent traversing the ocean there between the latitudes of 40° and 70° in such a way as to show the impossibility of its existence "unless near the pole, and beyond the reach of navigation." (We may be permitted, in these days of general advancement, mental and physical, to doubt whether any part of the globe is *absolutely* "beyond the reach of navigation!") He discovered also the islands of New Caledonia and Georgia, and the Sandwich Islands; explored the western coasts of North America into the frozen regions, and ascertained the proximity of the two great continents of Asia and America. In short,—to use the words of his biographer, which compress the nature and value of the great navigator's services to mankind into a small and easily comprehended point—"if we except the sea of Amur and the Japanese Archipelago, which still remains imperfectly known to Europeans, he has completed the hydrography of the habitable globe."

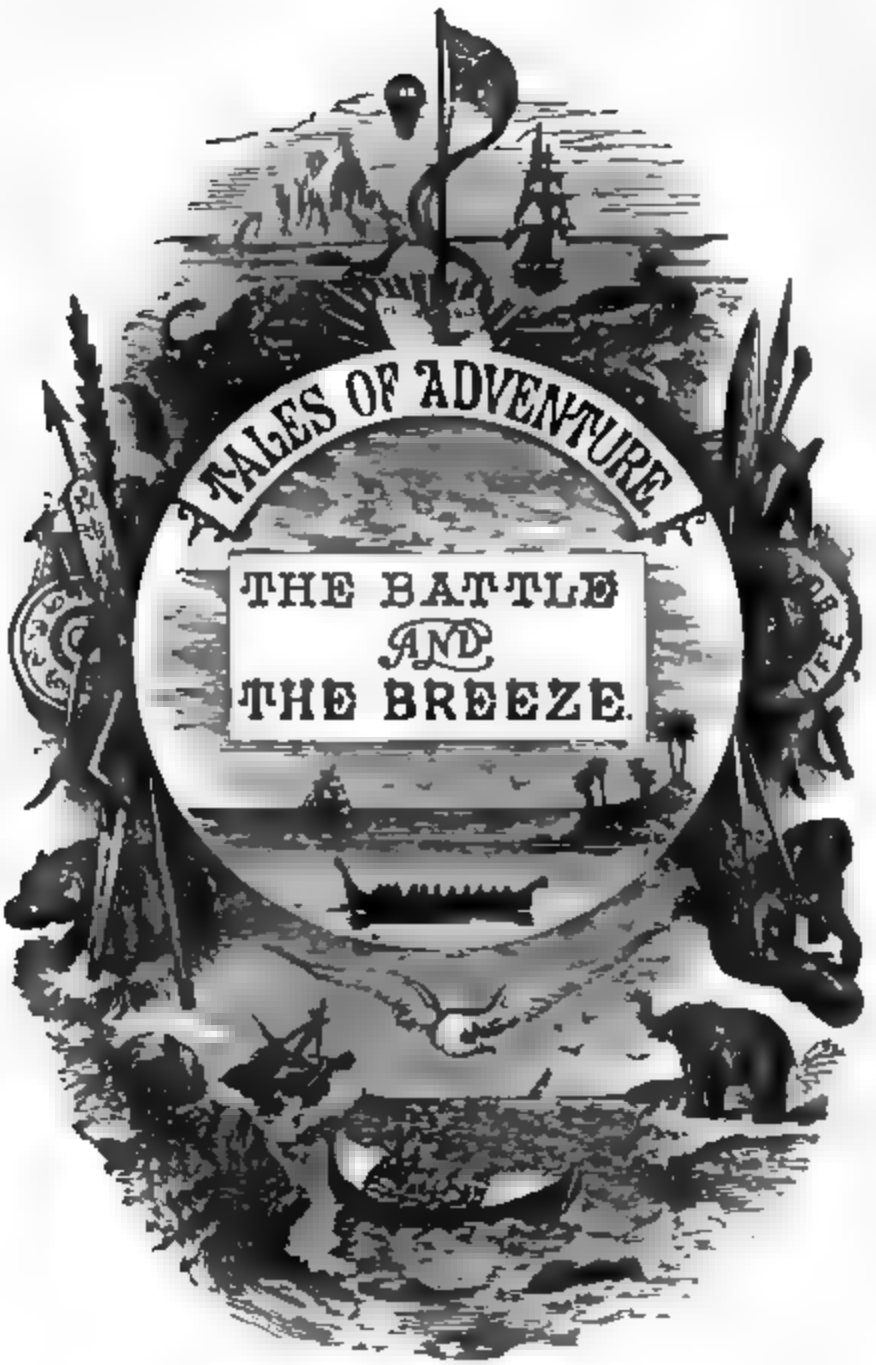
* * * * *

Captain Cook has passed away, and the generation of men, with those whom he benefited and those who slew him, has gone to its account, but the Coral Islands remain as they were of old, resplendent with the beautiful works of God, though not, *as of old*, marred so

terribly by the diabolical devices of man. "Cannibal Islands" some of them still are, without doubt, but a large proportion of them have been saved from heathen darkness by the light of God's Truth as revealed in the Holy Bible, and many thousands of islanders—including the descendants of those who slew the great Captain of the last generation—have enrolled themselves under the banner of the "Captain of our salvation," and are now, through God's mercy, clothed and in their right mind.

THE END.

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.


TALES OF ADVENTURE
THE BATTLE
AND
THE BREEZE

THE BATTLE AND THE BREEZE.

CHAPTER I.

TOUCHES ON OUR HERO'S EARLY LIFE, EXPERIENCES, AND ADVENTURES.

BILL BOWLS was the most amiable, gentle, kindly, and modest fellow that ever trod the deck of a man-of-war. He was also one of the most lion-hearted men in the Navy.

When Bill was a baby—a round-faced, large-eyed, fat-legged baby, as unlike to the bronzed, whiskered, strapping seaman who went by the name of "Fighting Bill" as a jack-daw is to a marlinespike—when Bill was a baby, his father used to say he was just cut out for a sailor; and he was right, for the urchin was overflowing with vigour and muscular energy. He was utterly reckless, and very earnest—we might almost say *desperately* earnest. Whatever he undertook to do he did "with a will." He spoke with a will, listened with a will, laughed, yelled, ate, slept, wrought, and fought with a

will. In short, he was a splendid little fellow, and therefore, as his father wisely said, was just cut out for a sailor.

Bill seemed to hold the same opinion, for he took to the water quite naturally from the very commencement of life. He laughed with glee when his mother used to put him into the wash-tub, and howled with rage when she took him out. Dancing bareheaded under heavy rain was his delight, wading in ponds and rivers was his common practice, and tumbling into deep pools was his most ordinary mishap. No wonder, then, that Bill learned at an early age to swim, and also to fear nothing whatever, except a blowing up from his father. He feared that, but he did not often get it, because, although full of mischief as an egg is full of meat, he was good-humoured and bidable, and, like all lion-hearted fellows, he had little or no malice in him.

He began his professional career very early in life. When in after years he talked to his comrades on this subject, he used to say—

"Yes, mates, I did begin to study navigation w'en I was about two foot high—more or less—an' I tell ee what it is, there 's nothin' like takin' old Father Time by the forelock. I was about four year old when I took my first start in the nautical way; and p'r'aps ye won't believe it, but it 's a fact, I launched my first ship

myself; owned her; commanded and navigated her, and was wrecked on my first voyage. It happened this way: my father was a millwright, he was, and lived near a small lake, where I used to splutter about a good deal. One day I got hold of a big plank, launched it after half an hour o' the hardest work I ever had, got on it with a bit of broken palin' for an oar, an' shoved off into deep water. It was a splendid burst! Away I went with my heart in my mouth and my feet in the water tryin' to steady myself, but as ill luck would have it, just as I had got my ship on an even keel an' was beginnin' to dip my oar with great caution, a squall came down the lake, caught me on the starboard quarter, and threw me on my beam-ends. Of coorse I went sowse into the water, and had only time to give out one awful yell when the water shut me up. Fortnitly my father heard me; jumped in and pulled me out, but instead of kicking me or blowin' me up, he told me that I should have kept my weather eye open an' met the squall head to wind. Then he got hold of the plank and made me try it again, and didn't leave me till I was able to paddle about on that plank almost as well as any Eskimo in his skin canoe. My good old dad finished the lesson by tellin' me to keep always *in shoal water till I could swim*, and to look out for squalls in future! It was lucky

for me that I had learned to obey him, for many a time I was capsized after that, when nobody was near me, but bein' always in shoal water, I managed to scramble ashore."

As Bill Bowls began life so he continued it. He went to sea in good earnest when quite a boy, and spent his first years in the coasting trade, in which rough service he became a thorough seaman, and was wrecked several times on various parts of our stormy shores. On reaching man's estate he turned a longing eye to foreign lands, and in course of time visited some of the most distant parts of the globe, so that he may be said to have been a great traveller before his whiskers were darker than a lady's eyebrows.

During these voyages, as a matter of course, he experienced great variety of fortune. He had faced the wildest of storms, and bathed in the beams of the brightest sunshine. He was as familiar with wreck as with rations; every species of nautical disaster had befallen him; typhoons, cyclones, and simooms had done their worst to him, but they could not kill him, for Bill bore a sort of charmed life, and invariably turned up again, no matter how many of his shipmates went down. Despite the rough experiences of his career he was as fresh and good-looking a young fellow as one would wish to see.

Before proceeding with the narrative of his life, we shall give just one specimen of his experiences while he was in the merchant service.

Having joined a ship bound for China, he set sail with the proverbial light heart and light pair of breeches, to which we may add light pockets. His heart soon became somewhat heavier when he discovered that his captain was a tyrant, whose chief joy appeared to consist in making other people miserable. Bill Bowls's nature, however, was adaptable, so that although his spirits were a little subdued, they were not crushed. He was wont to console himself, and his comrades, with the remark that this state of things couldn't last for ever, that the voyage would come to an end some time or other, and that men should never say die as long as there remained a shot in the locker!

That voyage did come to an end much sooner than he or the tyrannical captain expected!

One evening our hero stood near the binnacle talking to the steersman, a sturdy middle-aged sailor, whose breadth appeared to be nearly equal to his length.

"Tom Riggles," said Bill, somewhat abruptly, "we 're goin' to have dirty weather."

"That 's so, lad, I 'm not goin' to deny it," replied Tom, as he turned the wheel a little to windward.

Most landsmen would have supposed that

Bill's remark should have been, "We *have* got dirty weather," for at the time he spoke the good ship was bending down before a stiff breeze, which caused the dark sea to dash over her bulwarks and sweep the decks continually, while thick clouds, the colour of pea-soup, were scudding across the sky; but seafaring men spoke of it as a "capful of wind," and Bill's remark was founded on the fact that, for an hour past, the gale had been increasing, and the appearance of sea and sky was becoming more threatening.

That night the captain stood for hours holding on to the weather shrouds of the mizzen-mast without uttering a word to any one, except that now and then, at long intervals, he asked the steersman how the ship's head lay. Dark although the sky was, it did not seem so threatening as did the countenance of the man who commanded the vessel.

Already the ship was scudding before the wind, with only the smallest rag of canvas hoisted, yet she rose on the great waves and plunged madly into the hollows between with a violence that almost tore the masts out of her. The chief-mate stood by the wheel assisting the steersman; the crew clustered on the starboard side of the forecastle, casting uneasy glances now at the chaos of foaming water ahead, and then at the face of their captain, which was

occasionally seen in the pale light of a stray moonbeam. In ordinary circumstances these men would have smiled at the storm, but they had unusual cause for anxiety at that time, for they knew that the captain was a drunkard, and, from the short experience they had already had of him, they feared that he was not capable of managing the ship.

"Had we not better keep her a point more to the south'ard, sir?" said the mate to the captain, respectfully touching his cap; "reefs are said to be numerous here about."

"No, Mister Wilson," answered the captain, with the gruff air of a man who assumes and asserts that he knows what he is about, and does not want advice.

"Keep her a point to the west," he added, turning to the steersman.

There was a cry at that moment—a cry such as might have chilled the blood in the stoutest heart—

"Rocks ahead!"

"Port! port! hard-a-port!" shouted the men. Their hoarse voices rose above the gale, but not above the terrible roar of the surf, which now mingled with the din of the storm.

The order was repeated by the mate, who sprang to the wheel and assisted in obeying it. Round came the gallant ship with a magnificent sweep, and in another moment she would

have been head to wind, when a sudden squall burst upon her broadside and threw her on her beam-ends.

When this happened the mate sprang to the companion hatch to get an axe, intending to cut the weather-shrouds, so that the masts might go overboard and allow the ship to right herself, for, as she then lay, the water was pouring into her. Tom Riggles was, when she heeled over, thrown violently against the mate, and both men rolled to leeward. This accident was the means of saving them for the time, for just then the mizzen rigging gave way, the mast snapped across, and the captain and some of the men who had been hastening aft were swept with the wreck into the sea.

A few minutes elapsed ere Tom and the mate gained a place of partial security on the poop. The scene that met their gaze there was terrible beyond description. Not far ahead the sea roared in irresistible fury on a reef of rocks, towards which the ship was slowly drifting. The light of the moon was just sufficient to show that a few of the men were still clinging to the rail of the forecastle, and that the rigging of the main and fore masts still held fast.

"Have you got the hatchet yet?" asked Tom of the mate, who clung to a belaying-pin close behind him.

"Ay, but what matters it whether we strike the rocks on our beam-ends or an even keel?"

The mate spoke in the tones of a man who desperately dares the fate which he cannot avoid.

"Here! let me have it!" cried Tom.

He seized the hatchet as he spoke and clambered to the gangway. A few strokes sufficed to cut the overstrained ropes, and the mainmast snapped off with a loud report, and the ship slowly righted.

"Hold on!" shouted Tom to a man who appeared to be slipping off the bulwarks into the sea.

As no reply was given, the sailor boldly leapt forward, caught the man by the collar, and dragged him into a position of safety.

"Why, Bill, my boy, is't you?" exclaimed the worthy man in a tone of surprise, as he looked at the face of our hero, who lay on the deck at his feet; but poor Bill made no reply, and it was not until a glass of rum had been poured down his throat by his deliverer that he began to recover.

Several of the crew who had clung to different parts of the wreck now came aft one by one, until most of the survivors were grouped together near the wheel, awaiting in silence the shock which they knew must inevitably take place in the course of a few minutes, for the

ship, having righted, now drifted with greater rapidity to her doom.

It was an awful moment for these miserable men! If they could have only vented their feelings in vigorous action it would have been some relief, but this was impossible, for wave after wave washed over the stern and swept the decks, obliging them to hold on for their lives.

At last the shock came. With a terrible crash the good ship struck and recoiled, quivering in every plank. On the back of another wave she was lifted up, and again cast on the cruel rocks. There was a sound of rending wood and snapping cordage, and next moment the foremast was in the sea, tossing violently, and beating against the ship's side, to which it was still attached by part of the rigging. Three of the men who had clung to the shrouds of the foremast were swept overboard and drowned. Once more the wreck recoiled, rose again on a towering billow, and was launched on the rocks with such violence that she was forced forward and upwards several yards, and remained fixed.

Slight although this change was for the better, it sufficed to infuse hope into the hearts of the hitherto despairing sailors. The dread of being instantly dashed to pieces was removed, and with one consent they scrambled to the bow to see if there was any chance of reaching the shore.

Clinging to the fore-part of the ship they found the cook, a negro, whose right arm supported the insensible form of a woman—the only woman on board that ship. She was the wife of the carpenter. Her husband had been among the first of those who were swept overboard and drowned.

"Hold on to her, massa," exclaimed the cook; "my arm a'most brok."

The mate, to whom he appealed, at once grasped the woman, and was about to attempt to drag her under the lee of the caboose, when the vessel slipped off the rocks into the sea, parted amidships, and was instantly overwhelmed.

For some minutes Bill Bowls struggled powerfully to gain the shore, but the force of the boiling water was such that he was as helpless as if he had been a mere infant; his strength, great though it was, began to fail; several severe blows that he received from portions of the wreck nearly stunned him, and he felt the stupor that preceded death overpowering him, when he was providentially cast upon a ledge of rock. Against the same ledge most of his shipmates were dashed by the waves and killed, but he was thrown upon it softly. Retaining sufficient reason to realize his position, he clambered further up the rocks, and uttered an earnest "Thank God!" as he fell down exhausted beyond the reach of the angry waves.

Soon, however, his energies began to revive, and his first impulse, when thought and strength returned, was to rise and stagger down to the rocks, to assist, if possible, any of his shipmates who might have been cast ashore. He found only one, who was lying in a state of insensibility on a little strip of sand. The waves had just cast him there, and another towering billow approached, which would infallibly have washed him away, had not Bill rushed forward and dragged him out of danger.

It proved to be his friend Tom Riggles. Finding that he was not quite dead, Bill set to work with all his energy to revive him, and was so successful that in half-an-hour the sturdy seaman was enabled to sit up and gaze round him with the stupid expression of a tipsy man.

"Come, cheer up," said Bill, clapping him on the back; "you 'll be all right in a short while."

"Wot 's to do?" said Tom, staring at his rescuer.

"You 're all right," repeated Bill. "One good turn deserves another, Tom. You saved my life a few minutes ago, and now I 've hauled you out o' the water, old boy."

The sailor's faculties seemed to return quickly on hearing this. He endeavoured to rise, exclaiming—

"Any more saved?"

"I fear not," answered Bill sadly, shaking his head.

"Let's go see," cried Tom, staggering along the beach in search of his shipmates; but none were found; all had perished, and their bodies were swept away far from the spot where the ship had met her doom.

At daybreak it was discovered that the ship had struck on a low rocky islet on which there was little or no vegetation. Here for three weeks the two shipwrecked sailors lived in great privation, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and subsisting chiefly on shell-fish. They had almost given way to despair, when a passing vessel observed them, took them off, and conveyed them in safety to their native land.

Such was one of the incidents in our hero's career.

CHAPTER II.

COMMENCES THE STORY.

ABOUT the beginning of the present century, during the height of the war with France, the little fishing village of Fairway was thrown into a state of considerable alarm by the appearance of a ship of war off the coast, and the landing therefrom of a body of blue-jackets. At that time it was the barbarous custom to impress men, willing or not willing, into the Royal Navy. The more effective, and at the same time just, method of enrolling men in a naval reserve force had not occurred to our rulers, and, as a natural consequence, the inhabitants of sea-port towns and fishing villages were on the constant look-out for the press-gang.

At the time when the man-of-war's boat rowed alongside of the little jetty of Fairway, an interesting couple chanced to be seated in a bower at the back of a very small but particularly neat cottage near the shore. The bower was in keeping with its surroundings, being the half of an old boat set up on end. Roses and

honeysuckle were trained up the sides of it, and these, mingling their fragrance with the smell of tar, diffused an agreeable odour around. The couple referred to sat very close to each other, and appeared to be engaged in conversation of a confidential nature. One was a fair and rather pretty girl of the fishing community. The other was a stout and uncommonly handsome man of five-and-twenty, apparently belonging to the same class, but there was more of the regular sailor than the fisherman in his costume and appearance. In regard to their conversation, it may be well, perhaps, to let them speak for themselves.

"I tell ee wot it is, Nelly Blyth," said the man, in a somewhat stern tone of voice; "it won't suit me to dilly-dally in this here fashion any longer. You've kept me hanging off and on until I have lost my chance of gettin' to be mate of a Noocastle collier; an' here I am now, with nothin' to do, yawin' about like a Dutchman in a heavy swell, an' feelin' ashamed of myself."

"Don't be so hasty, Bill," replied the girl, glancing up at her lover's face with an arch smile; "what would you have?"

"What would I have?" repeated the sailor, in a tone of mingled surprise and exasperation. "Well, I never—no, I never did see nothin' like you women for bamboozlin' men. It seems to me you're like ships without helms. One

moment you're beatin' as hard as you can to wind'ard; the next you fall off all of a sudden and scud away right before the breeze; or, whew! round you come into the wind's eye, an' lay to as if you'd bin caught in the heaviest gale that ever blow'd since Admiral Noah cast anchor on Mount Ararat. Didn't you say, not three weeks gone by, that you'd be my wife? and now you ask me, as cool as an iceberg, what I would have! Why, Nelly, I would have our wedding-day fixed, our cottage looked after, our boat and nets bought; in fact, our home and business set agoin'. And why not at once, Nelly? Surely you have not repented—"

"No, Bill Bowls," said Nelly, blushing, and laying her hand on the arm of her companion, "I have not repented, and never will repent, of having accepted the best man that ever came to Fairway; but—"

The girl paused and looked down.

"There you go," cried the sailor, "the old story. I knew you would come to that 'but,' and that you'd stick there. Why don't you go on? If I thought that you wanted to wait a year or two, I could easily find work in these times; for Admiral Nelson is glad to get men to follow him to the wars, an' Tom Riggles and I have been talkin' about goin' off together."

"Don't speak of *that*, Bill," said the girl earnestly. "I dread the thought of you going to the wars; but—but—the truth is, I cannot make up my mind to quit my mother."

"You don't need to quit her," said Bill; "bring her with you. I'll be glad to have her at my fireside, for your sake, Nell."

"But she won't leave the old house."

"H'm! well, that difficulty may be got over by my comin' to the old house, since the old ooman won't come to the noo one. I can rent it from her, and buy up the furniture as it stands; so that there will be no occasion for her to move out of her chair.—Why, what's the objection to that plan?" he added, on observing that Nelly shook her head.

"She would never consent to sell the things, —not even to you, Bill; and she has been so long the head of the house that I don't think she would like to—to—"

"To play second fiddle," put in the sailor. "Very good, but I won't ask to play first fiddle. In fact, she may have first, second, and third, and double bass and trombone, all to herself as far as I am concerned. Come, Nelly, don't let us have any more 'buts;' just name the day, and I'll bear down on the parson this very afternoon."

Leaving them to continue the discussion of this interesting point, we will turn into the

cottage and visit the old woman who stood so much in the way of our hero's wishes.

Mrs. Blyth was one of those unfortunates who, although not very old, have been, by ill-health, reduced to the appearance of extreme old age. Nevertheless, she had been blessed with that Christian spirit of calm, gentle resignation, which is frequently seen in aged invalids, enabling them to bear up cheerfully under heavy griefs and sufferings. She was very little, very thin, very lame, very old-looking (ninety at least, in appearance), very tremulous, very subdued, and *very* sweet. Even that termagant gossip, Mrs. Hardsoul, who dwelt alone in a tumble-down hut near the quay, was heard upon one occasion to speak of her as "dear old Mrs. Blyth."

Beside Mrs. Blyth, on a stool, engaged in peeling potatoes, sat a young woman who was in all respects her opposite. Bessy Blunt was tall, broad, muscular, plain-looking, masculine, and remarkably unsubdued. She was a sort of maid-of-all-work and companion to the old woman. Mrs. Blyth lived in the hope of subduing her attendant—who was also her niece—by means of kindness.

"Who came into the garden just now?" asked Mrs. Blyth in a meek voice.

"Who would it be but William Bowls? sure he comes twice every day, sometimes oftener,"

replied Bessy; "but what's the use? nothing comes of it."

"Something *may* come of it, Bessy," said Mrs. Blyth, "if William settles down steadily to work; but I am anxious about him, for he seems to me hasty in temper. Surely, Bessy, you would not like to see our Nell married to an angry man?"

"I don't know about that," replied the girl testily, as she cut a potato in two halves with unnecessary violence; "all I know is that I would like to see her married to Bill Bowls. He's an able, handsome man. Indeed, I would gladly marry him myself if he asked me!"

Mrs. Blyth smiled a little at this. Bessy frowned at a potato and said "Humph!" sternly.

Now it happened just at that moment that the press-gang before referred to arrived in front of the cottage. Bessy chanced to look through the window, and saw them pass. Instantly she ran to the back door and screamed "Press-gang," as a warning to Bill to get out of the way and hide himself as quickly as possible, then, hastening back, she seized one of old Mrs. Blyth's crutches, ran to the front door, and slammed it to, just as the leader of the gang came forward.

Meanwhile William Bowls, knowing that if he did not make his escape, his hopes of being

married speedily would be blasted, turned to leap over the garden wall, but the leader of the press-gang had taken care to guard against such a contingency by sending a detachment round to the rear.

"It 's all up with me!" cried Bill, with a look of chagrin, on observing the men.

"Come, hide in the kitchen; quick! I will show you where," cried Nelly, seizing his hand and leading him into the house, the back door of which she locked and barred.

"There, get in," cried the girl, opening a low door in the wall, which revealed the coal-hole of the establishment.

Bill's brow flushed. He drew back with a proud stern look and hesitated.

"Oh, do! for *my* sake," implored Nell.

A thundering rap on the front door resounded through the cottage; the sailor put his pride in his pocket, stooped low and darted in. Nelly shut the door, and leaned a baking-board against it.

"Let us in!" said a deep voice outside.

"Never!" replied Bessy, stamping her foot.

"You had better, dear," replied the voice, in a conciliatory tone; "we won't do you any harm."

"Go along with you—brutes!" said the girl.

"We'll have to force the door if you don't open it, my dear."

"You'd better not!" cried Bessy through the keyhole.

At the same time she applied her eye to that orifice, and instantly started back, for she saw the leader of the gang retire a few paces preparatory to making a rush. There was short time for action, nevertheless Bessy was quick enough to fling down a large stool in front of the door and place herself in an attitude of defence. Next moment the door flew open with a crash, and a sailor sprang in, cutlass in hand. As a matter of course he tripped over the stool, and fell prostrate at Bessy's feet, and the man who followed received such a well-delivered blow from the crutch that he fell on the top of his comrade. While the heroine was in the act of receiving the third she felt both her ankles seized by the man who had fallen first. A piercing yell followed. In attempting to free herself she staggered back and fell, the crutch was wrenched from her grasp, and the whole gang poured over her into the kitchen, where they were met by their comrades, who had just burst in the back door.

"Search close," cried one of these; "there's a big fellow in the house; we saw him run into it."

"You may save yourselves the trouble; there's no man in this house," cried Bessy, who had risen and followed her conquerors, and who

now stood, with dishevelled locks, flushed countenance, and gleaming eyes, vowing summary vengeance on the first man she caught off his guard!

As the men believed her, they took care to keep well on their guard while engaged in the search. Poor old Mrs. Blyth looked absolutely horror-stricken at this invasion of her cottage, and Nelly stood beside her, pale as marble and trembling with anxiety.

Every hole and corner of the house was searched without success; the floors were examined for trap-doors, and even the ceilings were carefully looked over, but there was no sign of any secret door, and the careless manner in which the bake-board had been leaned against the wall, as well as its small size, prevented suspicion being awakened in that direction. This being the case, the leader of the gang called two of his men aside and engaged in a whispered conversation.

"It's quite certain that he is here," said one, "but where they have stowed him is the puzzle."

"Well, it is indeed a puzzle," replied the leader, "but I've thought of a plan. He may be the father, or brother, or cousin of the household, d'ye see, and it strikes me if we were to pretend to insult the women that would draw him out!"

"But I don't half like that notion," said one of the men.

"Why not?" asked the other, who wore a huge pair of whiskers, "it's only pretence, you know. Come, I'll try it."

Saying this he went towards old Mrs. Blyth, and whispered to Nelly—

"Don't be frightened, my ducky, we're only a-goin' to try a dodge, d' ye see. Stand by, we won't do you no harm."

The man winked solemnly several times with the view of reassuring Nelly, and then raising his voice to a loud pitch exclaimed—

"Come now, old ooman, it's quite plain that there's a feller in this here house, an' as we can't find him nowheres, we've come to the conclusion he must be under your big chair. In coorse we must ask you to git up, an' as ye don't seem to be able to do that very well, we'll have to lift you. So here goes."

The man seized the old woman's chair and shuffled with his feet as though he were about to lift it. Nelly screamed. Bessy uttered a howl of indignation, and rushed upon the foe with teeth and nails ready, but being arrested by a powerful man in rear, she vented her wrath in a hideous yell.

The success of the scheme was great—much greater, indeed, than had been anticipated. The bake-board fell flat down, the door of the

coal-hole burst open, and our hero, springing out, planted a blow on the nose of the big-whiskered man that laid him flat on the floor. Another blow overturned the man who restrained Bessy, and a third was about to be delivered when a general rush was made, and Bill Bowls, being overpowered by numbers, was finally secured.

"Now, my fine fellow," said the leader of the gang, "you may as well go with us quietly, for ye see resistance is useless, an' it only frightens the old woman."

This latter part of the remark had more effect on the unfortunate Bill than the former. He at once resigned himself into the hands of his captors. As he was about to be led away, he turned towards Mrs. Blyth, intending to speak, but the poor old woman had fainted, and Nelly's fears for her lover were lost for the moment in her anxiety about her mother. It was not until the party had left the room that the poor girl became fully aware of what was going on.

Uttering a loud cry she rushed towards the outer door. Bill heard the cry, and, exerting himself to the utmost, almost succeeded in overturning the five men who held him.

"Make your mind easy," said one of them; "no harm will come to the women. We ain't housebreakers or thieves. All fair an' above

board we are—true-blue British tars, as would rather swing at the yard-arm than hurt the feelin's of a woman, pretty or ugly, young or old. It 's all in the way of dooty, d' ye see? The King's orders, young man, so belay heavin' about like that, else we 'll heave ye on your beam-ends, lash you hand and futt to a hand-spike, and carry you aboord like a dead pig."

"Hold on!" cried the man with the big whiskers, who, after having been knocked down, had become emphatically the man with the big nose, "I 'll go back an' comfort them a bit; don't you take on so. *I* know all about it—see through it like a double patent hextromogriphal spy-glass. Only goin' on a short cruise, d' ye see? Come back soon with lots o' prize-money; get spliced right off, buy a noo gown with big flowers all over it for the old mother, pension off the stout gal wi' the crutch—all straight; that 's the thing, ain't it?"

"Don't, don't," entreated Bill earnestly; "don't go for to—to—"

"No fear, young man," replied the sailor, seeing that Bill hesitated; "Ben Bolter ain't the man to do anything that would bring discredit on His Majesty's service, and I bear you no grudge for this," he added, pointing to his swelled nose; "it was given in a good cause, and received in the reg'lar way o' business."

Saying this Ben Bolter ran back to the

cottage, where he tried to comfort the women to the best of his power. How he accomplished his mission does not remain on record, but it is certain that he rejoined his party, in little more than five minutes, with sundry new marks of violence on his huge honest face, and he was afterwards heard to remark that some creatures of the tiger species must have been born women by mistake, and that stout young females who had a tendency to use crutches, had better be pensioned off—or, "drownded if possible."

Thus was William Bowls impressed into the Royal Navy. On hearing that his old shipmate had been caught, Tom Riggles at once volunteered into the service, and they were both sent on board a man-of-war, and carried off to fight the battles of their country.

CHAPTER III.

BILL IS INITIATED INTO THE DUTIES OF HIS NEW STATION.

AT the time of which we write, England's battles and troubles were crowding pretty thick upon one another. About this period, Republican France, besides subduing and robbing Switzerland, Italy, Sardinia, and other States, was busily engaged in making preparation for the invasion of England,—Napoleon Bonaparte being in readiness to take command of what was styled the "army of England." Of course great preparations had to be made in this country to meet the invading foe. The British Lion was awakened, and although not easily alarmed or stirred up, he uttered a few deep-toned growls, which showed pretty clearly what the Frenchmen might expect if they should venture to cross the Channel. From John o' Groats to the Land's End the people rose in arms, and in the course of a few weeks 150,000 volunteers were embodied and their training begun.

Not satisfied with threatening invasion, the

Directory of France sought by every means to corrupt the Irish. They sent emissaries into the land, and succeeded so well that in May 1798 the rebellion broke out. Troops, supplies, and munitions of war were poured into Ireland by France; but the troops were conquered and the rebellion crushed.

Finding at length that the invasion of England could not be carried out, this pet project was abandoned, and Napoleon advised the Directory to endeavour to cripple her resources in the East. For the accomplishment of this purpose, he recommended the establishment on the banks of the Nile of a French colony, which, besides opening a channel for French commerce with Africa, Arabia, and Syria, might form a grand military depot, whence an army of 60,000 men could be pushed forward to the Indus, rouse the Mahrattas to a revolt, and excite against the British the whole population of those vast countries.

To an expedition on so grand a scale the Directory objected at first, but the master-spirit who advised them was beginning to feel and exert that power which ultimately carried him to the throne of the Empire. He overcame their objections, and the expedition to Egypt was agreed to.

With characteristic energy and promptitude Napoleon began to carry out his plans, and

Great Britain, seeing the storm that was brewing, commenced with equal energy to thwart him. Accordingly, the great Sir Horatio Nelson, at that time rear-admiral, was employed with a squadron to watch the movements and preparations of the French in the Mediterranean.

Such was the state of matters when our hero, Bill Bowls, was conveyed on board the *Waterwitch*, a seventy-four gun frigate, and set to work at once to learn his duty.

Bill was a sensible fellow. He knew that escape from the service, except in a dishonourable manner, was impossible, so he made up his mind to do his duty like a man, and return home at the end of the war (which he hoped would be a short one), and marry Nelly Blyth. Poor fellow, he little imagined what he had to go through before—but hold, we must not anticipate the story.

Well, it so happened that Bill was placed in the same mess with the man whose nose he had treated so unceremoniously on the day of his capture. He was annoyed at this, but the first time he chanced to be alone with him, he changed his mind, and the two became fast friends. It happened thus:—

They were standing on the weather-side of the forecastle in the evening, looking over the side at the setting sun.

"You don't appear to be easy in your

mind," observed Ben Bolter, after a prolonged silence.

"*You* wouldn't be if you had left a bride behind you," answered Bill shortly.

"How d' ye know that?" said Ben; "p'r'aps I *have* left one behind me. Anyhow, I 've left an old mother."

"That 's nothin' uncommon," replied Bill; "a bride may change her mind and become another man's wife, but your mother can't become your aunt or your sister by any mental operation that I knows of."

"I 'm not so sure o' that, now," replied Ben, knitting his brows, and gazing earnestly at the forebrace, which happened to be conveniently in front of his eyes; "see here, s'pose, for the sake of argiment, that you 've got a mother, an' she marries a second time—which some mothers is apt to do, you know,—and her noo husband has got a pretty niece. Nothin' more nat'ral than that you should fall in love with her and get spliced. Well, wot then? why, your mother is her aunt by vartue of her marriage with her uncle, and so your mother is *your* aunt in consikence of your marriage with the niece—d' ye see?"

Bill laughed, and said he didn't quite see it, but he was willing to take it on credit, as he was not in a humour for discussion just then.

"Very well," said Ben, "but, to return to

Bill and Ben become Friends.

the pint—which is, if I may so say, a pint of distinkshun between topers an' argifiers, for topers are always returnin' to the pint, an' argifiers are for ever departin' from it—to return to it, I say: you've no notion of the pecoolier sirkumstances in which I left my poor old mother. It weighs heavy on my heart, I assure ye, for it's only three months since I was pressed myself, an' the feelin's ain't had time to heal yet. Come, I'll tell ee how it was. You owe me some compensation for that crack on the nose you gave me, so stand still and listen."

Bill, who was becoming interested in his messmate in spite of himself, smiled, and nodded his head as though to say, "Go on."

"Well, you must know my old mother is just turned eighty, an' I'm thirty-six, so, as them that knows the rule o' three would tell ye, she was just forty-four when I began to trouble her life. I was a most awful wicked child, it seems. So they say at least; but I've no remembrance of it myself. Hows'ever, when I growed up and ran away to sea and got back again an' repented—mainly because I didn't like the sea—I tuk to mendin' my ways a bit, an' tried to make up to the old ooman for my prewious wickedness. I do believe I succeeded, too, for I got to like her in a way I never did before; and when I used to come home from

a cruise—for, of course, I soon went to sea again—I always had somethin' for her from furrin' parts. An' she was greatly pleased at my attentions an' presents—all except once, when I brought her the head of a mummy from Egypt. She couldn't stand that at all—to my great disappointment; an' what made it wuss was, that after a few days they had put it too near the fire, an' the skin it busted an' the stuffin' began to come out, so I took it out to the back garden an' gave it decent burial behind the pump.

"Hows'ever, as I wos goin' to say, just at the time I was nabbed by the press-gang was my mother's birth-day, an' as I happened to be flush o' cash, I thought I'd give her a treat an' a surprise, so off I goes to buy her some things, when, before I got well into the town—a sea-port it was—down comed the press-gang an' nabbed me. I showed fight, of course, just as you did, an' floored four of 'em, but they was too many for me, an' before I knowed where I was they had me into a boat and aboord this here ship, where I've bin ever since. I'm used to it now, an' rather like it, as no doubt you will come for to like it too; but it *was* hard on my old mother. I begged an' prayed them to let me go back an' bid her good-bye, an' swore I would return, but they only laughed at me, so I was obliged to write her a letter to

keep her mind easy. Of all the jobs I ever did have, the writin' of that letter was the wust. Nothin' but dooty would iver indooce me to try it again; for, you see, I didn't get much in the way of edication, an' writin' never came handy to me.

"Hows'ever," continued Ben, "I took so kindly to His Majesty's service that they almost look upon me as an old hand, an' actooally gave me leave to be the leader o' the gang that was sent to Fairway to take you, so that I might have a chance o' sayin' adoo to my old mother."

"What!" exclaimed Bowls, "is your mother the old woman who stops at the end o' Cow Lane, where Mrs. Blyth lives, who talks so much about her big-whiskered Ben?"

"That same," replied Ben, with a smile; "she was always proud o' me, specially after my whiskers comed. I thought that p'r'aps ye might have knowed her."

"I knows her by hearsay from Nelly Blyth, but not bein' a native of Fairway, of course I don't know much about the people.—Hallo! Riggles, what's wrong with ee to-day?" said Bill, as his friend Tom came towards him with a very perplexed expression on his honest face, "not repenting of havin' joined the sarvice already, I hope?"

"No, I ain't troubled about that," answered

Riggles, scratching his chin and knitting his brows; "but I've got a brother, d' ye see—"

"Nothin' uncommon in that," said Bolter, as the other paused.

"P'r'aps not," continued Tom Riggles; "but then, you see, my brother's such a preeplexin' sort o' feller, I don't know wot to make of him."

"Let him alone, then," suggested Ben Bolter.

"That won't do neither, for he's got into trouble; but it's a long story, an' I dessay you won't care to hear about it."

"You're out there, Tom," said Bowls; "come, sit down here and let's have it all."

The three men sat down on the combings of the fore-hatch, and Tom Riggles began by telling them that it was of no use bothering them with an account of his brother Sam's early life.

"Not unless there's somethin' partikler about it," said Bolter.

"Well, there ain't nothin' very partikler about it, 'xcept that Sam was partiklerly noisy as a baby, and wild as a boy, besides bein' uncommon partikler about his wittles, 'specially in the matter o' havin' plenty of 'em. Moreover, he ran away to sea when he was twelve years old, an' was partiklerly quiet after that for a long time, for nobody know'd where

he 'd gone to, till one fine mornin' my mother she gets a letter from him sayin' he was in China, drivin' a great trade in the opium line. We niver felt quite sure about that, for Sam worn't over partikler about truth. He was a kindly sort o' feller, hows'ever, an' continued to write once or twice a year for a long time. In these letters he said that his life was pretty wariable, as no doubt it was, for he wrote from all parts o' the world. First, he was clerk, he said, to the British counsel in Penang, or some sich name, though where that is I don't know; then he told us he 'd joined a man-o'-war, an' took to clearin' the pirates out o' the China seas. He found it a tough job appariently, an' got wounded in the head with a grape-shot, and half choked by a stink-pot, after which we heard no more of him for a long time, when a letter turns up from Californy, sayin' he was there shippin' hides on the coast; and after that he went through Texas an' the States, where he got married, though he hadn't nothin' wotever, as I knows of, to keep a wife upon—"

"But he may have had somethin' for all you didn't know it," suggested Bill Bowls.

"Well, p'r'aps he had. Hows'ever, the next we heard was that he 'd gone to Canada, an' tuk a small farm there, which was all well enough, but now we 've got a letter from him

sayin' that he's in trouble, an' don't see his way out of it very clear. He's got the farm, a wife an' a sarvant to support, an' nothin' to do it with. Moreover, the sarvant is a boy what a gentleman took from a Reformation-house, or somethin' o' that sort, where they put little thieves as has only bin in quod, for the fust time. They say that many of 'em is saved, and turns out well, but this feller don't seem to have bin a crack specimen, for Sam's remarks about him ain't complimentary. Here's the letter, mates," continued Riggles, drawing a soiled epistle from his pocket; "it'll give ee a better notion than I can wot sort of a fix he's in. Will you read it, Bill Bowls?"

"No, thankee," said Bill; "read it yerself, an' for any sake don't spell the words if ye can help it."

Thus admonished Tom began to read the following letter from his wild brother, interrupting himself occasionally to explain and comment thereon, and sometimes, despite the adjuration of Bill Bowls, to spell. We give the letter in the writer's own words:—

"'My dear mother [it's to mother, d'ye see; he always writes to her, an' she sends the letters to me.]—My dear mother, here we are all alive and kicking. My sweet wife is worth her weight in gold, though she does not possess more of that precious metal

than the wedding-ring on her finger—more's the pity, for we are sadly in want of it just now. The baby, too, is splendid. Fat as a prize pig, capable of roaring like a mad bull, and, it is said, uncommonly like his father. We all send our kind love to you, and father, and Tom. By the way, where *is* Tom? You did not mention him in your last. I fear he is one of these roving fellows whom the Scotch very appropriately style ne'er-do-weels. A bad lot they are. [Humph! you're one of 'em, Mister Sam, if ever there was, an' my only hope of ye is that you've got some soft places in your heart.]'"

"Go on, Tom," said Ben Bolter; "don't cut in like that on the thread of any man's story."

"Well," continued Riggles, reading with great difficulty, "Sam goes on for to say—"

"'We thank you for your good wishes, and trust to be able to send you a good account of our proceedings ere long. [You see Sam was always of a cheery, hopeful natur, he was.] We have now been on the place fifteen days, but have not yet begun the house, as we can get no money. Two builders have, however, got the plans, and we are waiting for their [sp—s-p-i-f- oh! spification; why, wot can that be?].'"

"It ain't spification, anyhow," said Bolter. "Spell it right through."

"Oh! I've got him, it's *specification*," cried Riggles; "well—"

"'—specification. Many things will cost more than we anticipated. We had to turn the family out who had squatted here, at two days' notice, as we could not afford to live at Kinmonday [that's the nearest town, I s'pose]. How they managed to live in the log cabin I do not know, as, when it rained—and it has done so twice since we came, furiously—the whole place was deluged, and we had to put an umbrella up in bed. We have had the roof raised and newly shingled, and are as comfortable as can be expected. Indeed, the hut is admirably adapted for summer weather, as we can shake hands between the logs.

"'The weather is very hot, although there has been much more rain this season than usual. There can be no doubt that this is a splendid country, both as regards soil and climate, and it seems a pity to see such land lying waste and unimproved for so many years. It far surpasses my expectations, both in natural beauty and capabilities. We have a deal of work to do in the way of fencing, for at present everybody's live stock is running over a large part of our land; but we haven't got money to buy fencing! Then we ought to have two horses, for the boy that was sent to me from the Reformatory can plough; but again, we

haven't a rap wherewith to buy them. One reason of this is that in a new place a fellow is not trusted at first, and the last two hundred dollars we had went in tools, household furniture, utensils, etc. We have been living on credit for an occasional chicken or duck from our neighbours, which makes but a poor meal for three—not to mention baby, being very small—and George, that's the boy, having a tremendous appetite!

"'I walked into town twice to try to get some meat, but although there are ostensibly two butchers, I failed to get any. They actually wanted payment for it! Heigho! how I wish that money grew on the trees—or bread. By the way, that reminds me that there are bread-fruit trees in the South Sea Islands. I think I'll sell the farm and go there. One day I had the good luck to rescue a fine young chicken from the talons of a big hawk, upon which we all made a good meal. I really don't know what we should have done had it not been for the great abundance of blackberries here. They are fine and large, and so plentiful that I can gather a bucketful in an hour. We have made them into jam and pies, and are now drying them for winter use. We have also hazel-nuts and plums by the cart-load, and crab-apples in numbers almost beyond the power of figures to express. There is also a

fruit about the size of a lime, which they call here the 'May apple,' but which I have named 'omnifruct,' as it combines the flavour of apples, pears, peaches, pine-apples, gooseberries, strawberries, rasps—in fact, it is hard to tell what it does *not* resemble. But after all, this is rather light food, and although very Eden-like living—*minus* the felicity—it does not quite satisfy people who have been used most part of their lives to beefsteaks and stout.

"'George came to me a week ago. The little rascal would have been here sooner, but first of all the stage-coach upset, and then he fell asleep and was carried ten miles beyond our clearing, and had to walk back as best he could with a big bundle on his shoulder. He is an uncommonly silent individual. We can hardly get him to utter a word. He does what he is told, but I have first to show him how, and generally end by doing it myself. He appears to be a remarkably dead boy, but my excellent wife has taken him in hand, and will certainly strike some fire out of him if she can't put it into him! She has just gone into town on a foraging expedition, and I fondly hope she may succeed in making a raise of some edibles.

"'I have distinguished myself lately by manufacturing a sideboard and dresser, as well as a table and bench for the female authority,

and expect to accomplish a henhouse and a gate next week. You see we work in hope. I fervently wish we could live on the same. However, I'm pretty jolly, despite a severe attack of rheumatism, which has not been improved by my getting up in the night and rushing out in my shirt to chase away trespassing cows and pigs, as we have not got a watch-dog yet.

"'When my wife shuts her eyes at night her dreams are of one invariable subject—blackberries! She cannot get rid of the impression, and I have serious fears that we shall all break out in brambles. There are not so many mosquitoes here as I had expected; just enough to keep us lively. How I shall rejoice when we have got a cow! It will be a great saving in butter and milk to our neighbours, who at present supply us with such things on credit! We can raise here wheat, oats, Indian corn, etc. The only difficulties are the want of seed and money! But it is unkind in me writing to you, mother, in this strain, seeing that you can't help me in my difficulties. However, don't take on about me. My motto is, 'Never give in.' Give our love to father, also to Tom. He's a good-hearted fellow is Tom, though I fear he'll never come to much good.—Believe me, your affectionate son,

SAM. RIGGLES.'"

"There," said Tom, folding up the letter; "what d' ye think o' that, mates?"

Tom did not at that time get an answer to his question, for just as he spoke the order was given to beat to quarters for exercise, and in a few minutes the decks were cleared, and every man at his post.

But the order which had been given to engage in mimic warfare, for the sake of training the new hands, was suddenly changed into the command to clear for action in earnest, when the look-out reported a French vessel on the weather-bow. Sail was immediately crowded on the *Waterwitch*, and all was enthusiasm and expectation as they gave chase to the enemy.

CHAPTER IV.

OUR HERO AND HIS FRIENDS SEE SERVICE.

THE *Waterwitch* was commanded at this time by Captain Ward, a man possessed of great energy and judgment, united to heroic courage. He had received orders to join that portion of the British fleet which, under Nelson, was engaged in searching for the French in the Mediterranean, and had passed Cape St. Vincent on his way thither, when he fell in with the French vessel.

During the morning a thick fog had obscured the horizon, concealing the enemy from view. When the rising sun dispersed it he was suddenly revealed. Hence the abrupt order on board the *Waterwitch* to prepare for action. As the fog lifted still more, another French vessel was revealed, and it was soon found that the English frigate had two Frenchmen of forty-four guns each to cope with.

"Just as it should be!" remarked Captain Ward, when this was ascertained. "There

would have been no glory in conquering one Frenchman equal to my own ship in size!"

The *Waterwitch* was immediately steered towards the ship that was nearest, in the expectation that she would show fight at once, but the French commander, probably wishing to delay the engagement until his other vessel could join him, made sail, and bore down on her. Captain Ward, on perceiving the intention, put on a press of canvas, and endeavoured to frustrate the enemy's design. In this he was only partially successful.

"Surely," said Bill Bowls to his friend Ben Bolter, with whom he was stationed at one of the starboard guns on the main deck, "surely we are near enough now to give 'em a shot."

"No we ain't," said Tom Riggles, who was also stationed at the same gun; "an' depend on it Cap'n Ward is not the man to throw away his shot for nothin'."

Ben Bolter and some of the other men at the gun agreed with this opinion, so our hero, whose fighting propensities were beginning to rouse up, had to content himself with gazing through the porthole at the flying enemy, and restrained his impatience as he best could.

At last the order was given to fire, and for an hour after that a running fight was maintained, but without much effect. When, how-

ever, the two ships of the enemy succeeded in drawing sufficiently near to each other, they hove to, and awaited the advance of the *Water-witch*, plying her vigorously with shot as she came on.

Captain Ward only replied with his bow chasers at first. He walked the deck with his hands behind his back without speaking, and, as far as his countenance expressed his feelings, he might have been waiting for a summons to dinner, instead of hastening to engage in an unequal contest.

"Cap'n Ward niver growls much before he bites," said Patrick Flinn, an Irishman, who belonged to Bowls's mess. "He minds me of a spalpeen of a dog I wance had, as was uncommon fond o' fightin', but niver even showed his teeth till he was within half a yard of his inemy, but, och! he gripped him then an' no mistake. You 'll see, messmates, that we won't give 'em a broadside till we're within half pistol-shot."

"Don't take on ye the dooties of a prophet, Paddy," said Ben Bolter, "for the last time ye tried it ye was wrong."

"When was that?" demanded Flinn.

"Why, no longer ago than supper-time last night, when ye said ye had eaten such a lot that ye wouldn't be able to taste another bite for a month to come, an' didn't I see ye pitchin'

into the wittles this mornin' as if ye had bin starvin' for a week past?"

"Git along wid ye," retorted Flinn; "yer jokes is as heavy as yerself, an' worth about as much."

"An' how much may that be?" asked Ben, with a grin.

"Faix, it's not aisy to tell. I would need to work it out in a algibrabical calkilation, but if ye divide the half o' what ye know by the double o' what ye don't know, an' add the quarter o' what ye might have know'd—redoocin' the whole to nothin', by means of a compound o' the rule o' three and sharp practice, p'r'aps you 'll—"

Flinn's calculation was cut short at that moment by the entrance of a round shot, which pierced the ship's side just abcve his head, and sent splinters flying in all directions, one of which killed a man at the next gun, and an other struck Bill Bowls on the left arm, wounding him slightly.

The exclamations and comments of the men at the gun were stopped abruptly by the orders to let the ship fall off and fire a broadside.

The *Waterwitch* trembled under the discharge, and then a loud cheer arose, for the immediate result was that the vessel of the enemy which had hit them was partially dis-

abled—her foretopmast and flying jibboom having been shot away.

The *Waterwitch* instantly resumed her course, and while Bill Bowls was busily employed in assisting to reload his gun, he could see that the two Frenchmen were close on their lee bow.

Passing to windward of the two frigates, which were named respectively *La Gloire* and the *St. Denis*, Captain Ward received a broadside from the latter, without replying to it, until he had crossed her bow within musket range, when he delivered a broadside which raked her from stem to stern. He then wore ship, and, passing between the two, fired his starboard broadside into the *Gloire*, and almost immediately after his port broadside into the *St. Denis*.

The effect on the two ships was tremendous.

Their sails and rigging were terribly cut up, and several of the yards came rattling down on their decks. The *Gloire*, in particular, had her rudder damaged. Seeing this, and knowing that in her crippled state she could do him no further damage, Captain Ward passed on, sailed round the stern of the *St. Denis*, and, when within six yards of her, sent a broadside right in at her cabin windows. Then he ranged alongside and kept up a tremendous fire.

The Frenchmen stuck to their guns admirably, but the British fired quicker. At such

close quarters every shot told on both sides. The din and crash of such heavy artillery was terrific; and it soon became almost impossible to see what was going on for the smoke.

Up to this point, although many of the men in the *Waterwitch* had been killed or wounded, only one of those who manned the gun at which Bill Bowls served had been hit.

"It's too hot to last long," observed Flinn, as he thrust home a ball and drew out the ramrod; "run her out, boys."

The men obeyed, and were in the act of pulling at the tackle, when a shot from the enemy struck the gun on the muzzle, tore it from its fastenings, and hurled it to the other side of the deck.

Strange to say, only one of the men who worked it was hurt by the gun; but in its passage across the deck it knocked down and killed three men, and jammed one of the guns on the other side in such a way that it became for a time unserviceable. Ben Bolter and his comrades were making desperate efforts to clear the wreck, when they heard a shout on deck for the boarders. The bowsprit of the *Waterwitch* had by that time been shot away; her rigging was dreadfully cut up, and her wheel smashed; and Captain Ward felt that, if the *St. Denis* were to get away, he could not pursue her. He therefore resolved to board.

"Come along, lads," cried Tom Riggles, on nearing the order; "let 's jine 'em."

He seized his cutlass as he spoke, and dashed towards the ladder, followed by Bowls, Bolter, Flinn, and others; but it was so crowded with men carrying the wounded down to the cockpit that they had to pause at the foot.

At that moment a handsome young midshipman was carried past, apparently badly wounded.

"Och!" exclaimed Flinn, in a tone of deep anxiety, "it 's not Mister Cleveland, is it? Ah! don't say he 's kilt!"

"Not quite," answered the midshipman, rousing himself, and looking round with flashing eyes as he endeavoured to wave his hand in the air. "I 'll live to fight the French yet."

The poor boy almost fainted from loss of blood as he spoke; and the Irishman, uttering a wild shout, ran towards the stern, intending to gain the deck by the companion-hatch, and wreak his vengeance on the French. Bill Bowls and Ben Bolter followed him. As they passed the cabin door Bowls said hastily to Bolter, "I say, Ben, here, follow me; I 'll show ye a dodge."

He ran into the cabin as he spoke and leaped out upon the quarter gallery, which by that time was so close to the quarter of the *St. Denis* that it was possible to jump from one to the other.

Without a moment's hesitation he sprang across, dashed in one of the windows, and went head foremost into the enemy's cabin, followed by Bolter. Finding no one to oppose them there, they rushed upon deck and into the midst of a body of marines who were near the after-hatchway.

"Down with the frog-eaters!" cried Ben Bolter, discharging his pistol in the face of a marine with one hand, and cleaving down another with his cutlass.

The "frog-eaters," however, were by no means despicable men; for one of them clubbed his musket and therewith hit Ben such a blow on the head that he fell flat on the deck. Seeing this, Bill Bowls bestrode his prostrate comrade, and defended him for a few seconds with the utmost fury.

Captain Ward, who had leaped into the miz zen chains of the enemy, leading the boarders, beheld with amazement two of his own men on the quarter-deck of the *St. Denis* attacking the enemy in rear. Almost at the same moment he observed the fall of one of them. His men also saw this, and giving an enthusiastic cheer they sprang upon the foe and beat them back. Bill Bowls was borne down in the rush by his friends, but he quickly regained his legs. Ben Bolter also recovered and jumped up. In five minutes more they were masters of the ship—hauled

down the colours, and hoisted the Union Jack at the Frenchman's peak.

During the whole course of this action the *Gloire*, which had drifted within range, kept up a galling fire of musketry from her tops on the deck of the *Waterwitch*. Just as the *St. Denis* was captured, a ball struck Captain Ward on the forehead, and he fell dead without a groan.

The first lieutenant, who was standing by his side at the moment, after hastily calling several men to convey their commander below, ordered the starboard guns of the prize to be fired into the *Gloire*. This was done with such effect that it was not found necessary to repeat the dose. The Frenchman immediately hauled down his colours, and the fight was at an end.

It need scarcely be said that the satisfaction with which this victory was hailed was greatly modified by the loss of brave Captain Ward, who was a favourite with his men, and one who would in all probability have risen to the highest position in the service, had he lived. He fell while his sun was in the zenith, and was buried in the ocean, that wide and insatiable grave, which has received too many of our brave seamen in the prime of life.

The first lieutenant, on whom the command temporarily devolved, immediately set about repairing damages, and, putting a prize crew

into each of the French ships, sailed with them to the nearest friendly port.

The night after the action Bill Bowls, Ben Bolter, and Tom Riggles sat down on the heel of the bowsprit to have a chat.

"Not badly hit?" asked Ben of Bill, who was examining the bandage on his left arm.

"Nothin' to speak of," said Bill; "only a scratch. I'm lucky to have got off with so little; but I say, Ben, how does your head feel? That Mounseer had a handy way o' usin' the handspike. I do believe he would have cracked any man's skull but your own, which must be as thick as the head of an elephant. I see'd it comin', but couldn't help ye. Hows'ever, I saved ye from a second dose."

"It wos pritty hardish," said Ben, with a smile, "an' made the stars sparkle in my brain for all the world like the rory borailis, as I 've see'd so often in the northern skies; but it 's all in the way o' trade, so I don't grumble; the only thing as bothers me is that I can't git my hat rightly on by reason of the bump."

"You 've no cause to complain—neither of ye," said Tom Riggles, whose left hand was tied up and in a sling, "for you 've lost nothin' but a little blood an' a bit o' skin, whereas I 've lost the small finger o' my right hand."

"Not much to boast of that," said Ben Bolter contemptuously; "why, just think of

poor Ned Summers havin' lost an arm, and Edwards a leg—not to mention the poor fellows that have lost their lives."

"A finger is bad enough," growled Tom.

"Well, so it is," said Bowls. "By the way, I would advise you to try a little of that wonderful salve invented by a Yankee for such cases."

"Wot salve wos that?" asked Tom gruffly, for the pain of his wound was evidently pretty severe.

"Why, the growin' salve, to be sure," replied Bill. "Everybody must have heard of it."

"*I* never did," said Tom. "Did you, Ben?"

"No, never; wot is it?"

"It's a salve for growin' on lost limbs," said Bill. "The Yankee tried it on a dog that had got its tail cut off. He rubbed a little of the salve on the end of the dog, and a noo tail grow'd on next mornin'!"

"Gammon!" ejaculated Tom Riggles.

"True, I assure ye, as was proved by the fact that he afterwards rubbed a little of the salve on the end of the tail, and a noo dog growed on it in less than a week!"

"H'm! I wonder," said Tom, "if he was to rub some of it inside o' your skull, whether he could grow you a noo set o' brains."

"I say, Bill," interposed Ben Bolter, "did

you hear the first lieutenant say where he intended to steer to?"

"I heard somethin' about Gibraltar, but don't know that he said we was goin' there. It 's clear, hows'ever, that we must go somewhere to refit before we can be of any use."

"Ay; how poor Captain Ward would have chafed under this delay!" said Bill Bowls sadly. "He would have been like a caged tiger. That 's the worst of war; it cuts off good and bad men alike. There 's not a captain in the fleet like the one we have lost, Nelson alone excepted."

"Well, I don't know as to that," said Ben Bolter; "but there 's no doubt that Admiral Nelson is the man to lick the French, and I only hope that he may find their fleet, and that I may be there to lend a hand."

"Ditto," said Bill Bowls.

"Do," added Tom Riggles.

Having thus expressed their sentiments, the three friends separated. Not long afterwards the *Waterwitch* sailed with her prizes into Gibraltar.

Here was found a portion of the fleet which had been forwarded by Earl St. Vincent to reinforce Nelson. It was about to set sail, and as there was every probability that the *Waterwitch* would require a considerable time to refit, some of her men were drafted into other ships.

Among others, our friends Bill Bowls, Ben Bolter, and Tom Riggles, were sent on board the *Majestic*, a seventy-four gun ship of the line, commanded by Captain Westcott, one of England's most noted captains.

This vessel, with ten line-of-battle ships, set sail to join Nelson, and assist him in the difficult duty of watching the French fleet.

CHAPTER V.

NELSON HUNTS THE FRENCH.

AT this time Sir Horatio Nelson had been despatched to the Mediterranean with a small squadron to ascertain the object of the great expedition which was fitting out, under Napoleon Bonaparte, at Toulon.

Nelson had for a long time past been displaying, in a series of complicated and difficult operations in the Mediterranean, those splendid qualities which had already won for him unusual honours and fame, and which were about to raise him to that proud pinnacle which he ultimately attained—as England's greatest naval hero. His address and success in matters of diplomacy had filled his superiors and the Government with sentiments of respect; his moral courage in risking reputation and position with unflinching resolution, by *disobeying* orders when by so doing the good and credit of his country could be advanced, made him an object of dread to some, of admiration to others, while his lionlike animal courage and amiability endeared him to his officers and men. Sailors

had begun to feel that where Nelson led the way victory was certain, and those who were ordered to join his fleet esteemed themselves most fortunate.

The defeat of the French armament was considered by the English Government a matter of so great importance, that Earl St. Vincent, then engaged in blockading the Spanish fleet, was directed, if he thought it necessary, to draw off his entire fleet for the purpose, and relinquish the blockade. He was, however, told that, if he thought a detachment sufficient, he was to place it under the command of Sir Horatio Nelson. The Earl did consider a detachment sufficient, and had already made up his mind to give the command to Nelson, being thoroughly alive to his great talents and other good qualities. He accordingly sent him to the Mediterranean with three ships of the line, four frigates, and a sloop of war.

This force was now, by the addition to which we have referred, augmented so largely that Nelson found himself in possession of a fleet with which he might not only "watch" the enemy, but, if occasion should offer, attack him.

He was refitting after a storm in the Sardinian harbour of St. Pietro, when the reinforcements hove in sight. As soon as the ships were seen from the masthead of the Admiral's vessel, Nelson immediately signalled

that they should put to sea. Accordingly the united fleet set sail, and began a vigorous search for the French armament, which had left Toulon a short time before.

The search was for some time unsuccessful. No tidings could be obtained of the destination of the enemy for some time, but at length it was learned that he had surprised Malta.

Although his fleet was inferior in size to that of the French, Nelson—and indeed all his officers and men—longed to meet with and engage them. The Admiral, therefore, formed a plan to attack them while at anchor at Gozo, but he received information that the French had left that island the day after their arrival. Holding very strongly the opinion that they were bound for Egypt, he set sail at once in pursuit, and arrived off Alexandria on the 28th of June 1798.

There, to his intense disappointment, he found that nothing had been seen or heard of the enemy. Nelson's great desire was to meet with Napoleon Bonaparte and fight him on the sea. But this wish was not to be gratified. He found, however, that the governor of Alexandria was endeavouring to put the city in a state of defence, for he had received information from Leghorn that the French expedition was intended to proceed against Egypt after having taken Malta.

Leaving Alexandria, Nelson proceeded in various directions in search of the French, carrying a press of sail night and day in his anxiety to fall in with them, but being baffled in his search, he was compelled to return to Sicily to obtain fresh supplies in order to continue the pursuit.

Of course Nelson was blamed in England for his want of success in this expedition, and Earl St. Vincent was severely censured for having sent so young an officer on a service so important. Anticipating the objection, that he ought not to have made so long a voyage without more certain information, Nelson said, in vindication of his conduct:—

"Who was I to get such information from? The Governments of Naples and Sicily either knew not, or chose to keep me in ignorance. Was I to wait patiently until I heard certain accounts? If Egypt were their object, before I could hear of them, they would have been in India. To do nothing was disgraceful; therefore I made use of my understanding. I am before your Lordships' judgment; and if, under all circumstances, it is decided that I am wrong, I ought, for the sake of our country, to be superseded; for at this moment, when I know the French are not in Alexandria, I hold the same opinion as off Cape Passaro—that, under all circumstances, I was right in steering

for Alexandria; and by that opinion I must stand or fall."

It was ere long proved that Nelson *was* right, and that Earl St. Vincent had made no mistake in sending him on a service so important; for we now know that in all the British fleet there was not another man so admirably adapted for the duty which was assigned to him, of finding, fighting, and conquering the French, in reference to whom he wrote to the first lord of the Admiralty, "Be they bound to the antipodes, your lordship may rely that I will not lose a moment in bringing them to action!"

Re-victualled and watered, the British fleet set sail on the 25th of July from Syracuse. On the 28th, intelligence was received that the enemy had been seen about four weeks before, steering to the S.E. from Candia.

With characteristic disregard of the possible consequences to his own fame and interest, in his determination to "do the right," Nelson at once resolved to return to Alexandria. Accordingly, with all sail set, the fleet stood once more towards the coast of Egypt.

Perseverance was at length rewarded. On the 1st of August 1798, about ten in the morning, they sighted Alexandria, and saw with inexpressible delight that the port was crowded with the ships of France.

And here we venture to say that we sympathize with the joy of the British on this occasion, and shall explain why we do so.

Not every battle that is fought—however brilliant in military or naval tactics it may be, or in exhibitions of personal prowess—deserves our sympathy. Only that war which is waged against oppression is entitled to respect, and this, we hold, applies to the war in which the British were engaged at that time.

France, under the Directory, had commenced a career of unwarrantable conquest, for the simple purpose of self-aggrandizement, and her great general, Bonaparte, had begun that course of successful warfare in which he displayed those brilliant talents which won for him an empire, constituted him, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, a hero, and advanced France to a high position of tyrannical power. But brilliant talents and success could not free him from the charge of being a wholesale murderer.

To oppose such pretensions and practices was a bounden duty on the part of those who loved justice, just as much as it is the duty of every one who has the power to thwart the designs of, and forcibly overcome, a highwayman or a pirate.

Observe, reader, that we do not intend here to imply an invidious comparison. We have no sympathy with those who hold that England

was and always is in favour of fair play, while France was bent on tyranny. On the contrary, we believe that England has in some instances been guilty of the sin which we now condemn, and that, on the other hand, many Frenchmen of the present day would disapprove of the policy of France in the time of Napoleon the First. Neither do we sympathize with the famous saying of Nelson that "one Englishman is equal to three Frenchmen!" The tendency to praise one's-self has always been regarded among Christian nations as a despicable, or at least a pitiable, quality, and we confess that we cannot see much difference between a boastful man and a boastful nation. Frenchmen have always displayed chivalrous courage, not a whit inferior to the British, and history proves that in war they have been eminently successful. The question whether they could beat us or we could beat them, if tested in a fair stand-up fight with equal numbers, besides being an unprofitable one, is not now before us. All that we are concerned about at present is, that in the war now under consideration the British *did* beat the French, and we rejoice to record the fact solely on the ground that we fought in a righteous cause.

With these remarks we proceed to give an account of one of the greatest naval victories ever achieved by British arms.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

AFTER Napoleon Bonaparte had effected his landing in Egypt, the French fleet was permitted to remain at Alexandria for some time, and thus afforded Nelson the opportunity he had sought for so long.

For many previous days he had been almost unable, from anxiety, to take sleep or food, but now he ordered dinner to be served, while preparations were being made for battle, and when his officers rose to leave the table, he said to them:—"Before this time to-morrow, I shall have gained a peerage or Westminster Abbey."

The French had found it impossible to enter the neglected and ruined port of Alexandria. Admiral Brueys had, by command of Napoleon, offered a reward of 10,000 livres to any native pilot who would safely convey the squadron in, but not one was found who would venture to take charge of a single vessel that drew more than twenty feet. The gallant admiral was compelled, therefore, to anchor in Aboukir Bay, and chose the strongest position that was pos-

sible in the circumstances. He ranged his ships in a compact line of battle, in such a manner that the leading vessel lay close to a shoal, while the remainder of the fleet formed a curve along the line of deep water, so that it was thought to be impossible to turn it by any means in a S.W. direction, and some of the French, who were best able to judge, said that they held a position so strong that they could bid defiance to a force more than double their own. The presumption was not unreasonable, for the French had the advantage of the English in ships, guns, and men, but they had omitted to take into their calculations the fact that the English fleet was commanded by one whose promptitude in action, readiness and eccentricity of resource, and utter disregard of consequences when what he deemed the path to victory lay before him, might have been equalled, but certainly could not have been surpassed, by Bonaparte himself.

The French force consisted of thirteen ships of the line and four frigates, carrying in all 1196 guns and 11,230 men. The English had thirteen ships of the line and a fifty-gun ship, carrying in all 1012 guns and 8068 men. All the English line-of-battle ships were seventy-fours. Three of the French ships carried eighty-eight guns, and one, *L'Orient*, was a monster three-decker with 120 guns.

In order to give the reader a better idea of the forces engaged on both sides, we give the following list of ships. It is right, however, to add that one of those belonging to the English (the *Culloden*) ran aground on a shoal when about to go into action, and took no part in the fight.

ENGLISH SHIPS.

	Names.	Commanders.	Guns.	Men.	
1.	Vanguard,	Admiral Nelson, Captain Berry,	74	590	
2.	Minotaur,	Thos. Louis,	74	640	
3.	Theseus,	R. W. Miller,	74	590	
4.	Alexander,	A. J. Ball,	74	590	
5.	Swiftsure,	B. Hallowell	74	590	
6.	Audacious,	D. Gould,	74	590	
7.	Defence,	J. Peyton,	74	590	
8.	Zealous,	S. Hood,	74	590	
9.	Orion,	Sir James Saumarez,	74	590	
10.	Goliath,	Thos. Foley,	74	590	
11.	Majestic,	G. B. Westcott	74	590	
12.	Bellerophon,	H. D. E. Darby,	74	590	
13.	Culloden,	T. Trowbridge,	74	590	Not engaged.
14.	Leander,	T. B. Thomson,	50	343	
15.	La Mutine—Brig.				

FRENCH SHIPS.

1.	L'Orient,	Admiral Brueys,	120	1010 Burnt.
2.	Le Franklin,		80	800 Taken.
3.	Le Tonnant,		80	800 Taken.
4.	Le Guillaume Tell,		80	800 Escaped.
5.	Le Conquerant,		74	700 Taken.
6.	Le Spartiate,		74	700 Taken.
7.	L'Aquilon,		74	700 Taken.
8.	Le Souverain Peuple,		74	700 Taken.
9.	L'Heureux,		74	700 Taken.
10.	Le Timoleon,		74	700 Burnt.

	Names.	Guns.	Men.	
11.	Le Mercure,	74	700	Taken.
12.	Le Genereux,	74	700	Escaped.
13.	Le Guerrier,	74	600	Taken.
14.	La Diane (Frigate),	48	300	Escaped.
15.	La Justice (Frigate),	44	300	Escaped.
16.	L'Artemise (Frigate),	36	250	Burnt.
17.	La Serieux (Frigate),	36	250	Dismasted and Sunk.

Such were the forces that met to engage in deadly conflict on the 1st of August 1798, with not only national but world-wide interest pending on the issue, for the battle of the Nile was one of the leading battles of the world.

When Nelson perceived the position of the enemy, his fertile and active mind at once evolved a characteristic course of action. Where there was room, he said, for an enemy's ship to swing, there was room for one of his to anchor. He therefore at once formed the plan of doubling on the French ships, stationing one of his ships on the bow and another on the quarter of each of the enemy.

Nelson immediately explained his intended course to his officers. It had been his custom, during the whole time he was engaged in searching for the French fleet, to have his captains as frequently as possible on board the *Vanguard*, when he explained to them his opinions as to the best mode of attack in all the various positions in which it was possible or probable that the enemy might be found. Hence they

knew their commander's tactics so well, that when the hour for action arrived, no time was lost in the tedious operation of signalling orders. He had such confidence in all his officers, that after thoroughly explaining his intended plan of attack, he merely said to them, "Form as is most convenient for mutual support, and anchor by the stern. First gain the victory, and then make the best use of it you can."

When Captain Berry, perceiving the boldness of the plan, said, "If we succeed, what will the world say?" Nelson replied, "There is no *if* in the case; that we shall succeed is certain: who may live to tell the story is a very different question!"

Nelson possessed in an eminent degree the power of infusing into his men the irresistible confidence that animated his own bosom. There was probably not a man in the British fleet who did not sail into Aboukir Bay on that memorable day with a feeling of certainty that the battle was as good as gained before it was begun. The cool, quiet, self-possessed manner in which the British tars went to work at the beginning must have been very impressive to the enemy; for, as they advanced, they did not even condescend to fire a shot in reply to the storm of shot and shell to which the leading ships were treated by the batteries on

an island in the bay, and by the broadsides of the whole French fleet at half gunshot-range, the men being too busily engaged in furling the sails aloft, attending to the braces below, and preparing to cast anchor!

Nelson's fleet did not all enter the bay at once, but each vessel lost no time in taking up position as it arrived; and as, one after another, they bore down on the enemy, anchored close alongside, and opened fire, the thunder of the French fleet was quickly and increasingly augmented by the British, until the full tide of battle was reached, and the shores of Egypt trembled under the incessant rolling roar of dreadful war; while sheets of flame shot forth and rent the thick clouds which enwrapped the contending fleets, and hung incumbent over the bay.

An attempt was made by a French brig to decoy the English ships towards a shoal before they entered Aboukir Bay, but it failed, because Nelson either knew the danger or saw through the device.

It seemed as if the *Zealous* (Captain Hood) was to have the honour of commencing the action, but Captain Foley passed her in the *Goliath*, and successfully accomplished that feat which the French had deemed impossible, and had done their best to guard against. Instead of attacking the leading ship—the *Guerrier*—outside, he sailed round her bows, passed be-

tween her and the shore, and cast anchor. Before he could bring up, however, he had drifted down to the second ship of the enemy's line—the *Conquerant*—and opened fire. It had been rightly conjectured that the landward guns of the enemy would not be manned, or even ready for action. The *Goliath*, therefore, made short and sharp work of her foe. In ten minutes the masts of the *Conquerant* were shot away! The *Zealous* was laid alongside the *Guerrier*, and in twelve minutes that vessel was totally disabled. Next came the *Orion* (Sir J. Saumarez), which went into action in splendid style. Perceiving that a frigate lying farther inshore was annoying the *Goliath*, she sailed towards her, giving the *Guerrier* a taste of her larboard guns as long as they would bear upon her, then dismasted and sunk the frigate, hauled round towards the French line, and, anchoring between the *Franklin* and the *Souverain Peuple*, received and returned the fire of both.

In like manner the *Audacious* (Captain Gould) justified her name by attacking the *Guerrier* and *Conquerant* at once, and, when the latter struck, passed on to the *Souverain Peuple*.

The unfortunate *Guerrier* was also worthy of her title, for she bore the brunt of the battle. Every ship that passed her appeared to deem it a duty to give her a broadside before settling

down to its particular place in the line, and finding its own special antagonist or antagonists —for several of the English ships engaged two of the enemy at once. The *Theseus* (Captain Miller), after bringing down the main and mizzen masts of the *Guerrier*, anchored inside the *Spartiate* and engaged her.

Meanwhile, on the other side of this vessel, Nelson's ship, the *Vanguard*, bore down on the foe with six flags flying in different parts of the rigging, to guard against the possibility of his colours being shot away! She opened a tremendous fire on the *Spartiate* at half pistol-range. The muscular British tars wrought with heroic energy at the guns. In a few minutes six of these guns, which stood on the forepart of the *Vanguard's* deck, were left without a man, and three times afterwards were these six guns cleared of men—so terrific was the fire of the enemy.

Other four of the British vessels sailed ahead of the *Vanguard* and got into action. One of these—the *Bellerophon* (Captain Darby)—engaged the gigantic *Orient*, which was so disproportionately large that the weight of ball from her lower deck alone exceeded that from the whole broadside of her assailant. The result was that the *Bellerophon* was overpowered, 200 of her men were killed or wounded, all her masts and cables were shot away, and she drifted out

of the line. Her place, however, was taken by the *Swiftsure*, which not only assailed the *Orient* on the bow, but at the same time opened a steady fire on the quarter of the *Franklin*.

Before this time, however, the shades of night had fallen on the scene. The battle began at half-past six in the evening—half-an-hour afterwards daylight was gone, and the deadly fight was lighted only by the lurid and fitful flashing of the guns.

Those vessels of the English squadron which happened to be in rear were some leagues astern when the fight began, and it was so dark when they entered that extreme difficulty was experienced in getting in. One of these—the *Culloden* (Captain Trowbridge)—sounded carefully as she went, but got aground, where she remained helpless during the action, despite the efforts of the *Leander* and *Mutine* brig to get her off. She served, however, as a beacon to the *Alexander* and *Swiftsure*.

The latter ship, on entering the bay, fell in with the drifting and disabled *Bellerophon*, which was at first supposed to be one of the enemy, because she did not show the signal ordered by Nelson to be hoisted by his ships at the mizzen peak. This arose, of course, from the masts having been shot away. Captain Hallowell wisely refrained from firing on her, saying that, if she was an enemy, she was too

much disabled to escape. He passed on, therefore, and, as we have said, took the station and the duty from which the other had been driven.

The huge *Orient* was now surrounded. Captain Ball, in the *Alexander*, anchored on her larboard quarter, and, besides raking her with his guns, kept up a steady fire of musketry on her decks. Captain Thomson also, in the *Leander*, took up such a position that he could fire into her and the *Franklin* at the same time.

Standing in the midst of death and destruction, the hero of the Nile did not escape scathless. He remained unhurt, however, until he knew that victory was certain. The first and second ships of the enemy's line were disabled, as we have said, at the commencement of the action, and the third, fourth, and fifth were taken between eight and nine; so that Nelson could not have much, if any, doubt as to the issue of the battle.

Suddenly he received a wound on the head from a piece of langridge shot, and fell into the arms of Captain Berry. A large flap of skin was cut from the bone and fell over his sound eye,—the other having been lost in a previous engagement. The flow of blood was very great, and, being thus totally blinded, he thought that he had received a mortal wound. He was immediately carried down to the cock-pit.

The cock-pit of a man-of-war lies in that

part of the ship which is below water, and is never visited by the light of day. Being safe also from the visitation of shot or shell, it has been selected as the place to which the wounded are conveyed during an action to have their wounds dressed and limbs amputated by the surgeons—whose hands at such seasons are, as may easily be supposed, much too full. No pen can describe adequately the horrors of that dimly-lighted place, with its flickering lights, glittering knives, bloody tables and decks, and mangled men, whose groans of agony burst forth in spite of their utmost efforts to repress them. Here, in the midst of dead, dying, and suffering men, the great Admiral sat down to wait his turn.

The surgeon was engaged in dressing the wounds of a sailor when he was brought down. On learning who it was that required his services, he quitted the man who was under his hands. "No," said Nelson, refusing his proffered assistance, "no; I will take my turn with my brave fellows." Accordingly, there he remained, persistently refusing aid, until every man who had been previously wounded had been attended to! When his turn came, it was found that his wound was merely superficial; and heartfelt was the joy expressed by the wounded men and the crew of the *Vanguard* when this was made known.

But before this had been ascertained, and while he believed himself to be dying, Nelson called the chaplain, and gave him his last remembrance to Lady Nelson, appointed a successor to Captain Berry, who was to go to England with the news of the victory, and made other arrangements in anticipation of his death. But his hour had not yet come. When the surgeon pronounced his hurt to be superficial, he refused to take the rest which was recommended, and at once sent for his secretary to write despatches.

While he was thus engaged, a cry was heard which rose above the din of battle, proclaiming that the *Orient* was on fire. In the confusion that followed, Nelson found his way upon deck unassisted, and, to the astonishment of every one, appeared on the quarter-deck, and gave orders to lower the boats, and send relief to the enemy.

But before describing the scene that followed, we shall turn aside for a little to watch more closely the proceedings of Captain Westcott in the *Majestic*, and the personal deeds of Bill Bowls and his messmates.

CHAPTER VII.

BATTLE OF THE NILE—*Continued.*

THE *Majestic* was one of the four ships which sailed into action in the wake of the Admiral.

Our hero, Bill Bowls, and his friend Ben Bolter, were stationed at one of the guns on the larboard side of the main deck. Flinders stood near them. Everything was prepared for action. The guns were loaded, the men, stripped to the waist, stood ready, and the matches were lighted, but as yet no order had been given to fire. The men on the larboard side of the ship stood gazing anxiously through the portholes at the furious strife in which they were about to engage.

"Ah, then! but it's hot work is goin' on," said Flinders, turning to Ben Bolter just after a crash of artillery somewhat louder than usual.

"It's hotter work ye'll see soon, when the Admiral gits into action," said Ben.

"True for ye," answered Flinders; "he's a broth of a boy for fightin'. It's an Irishman

he should have been born. Hooroo, my hearties! look out!"

This latter exclamation was drawn forth by the crashing of a stray shot, which entered the ship close to the spot where they stood, and passed out on the starboard side, sending splinters of wood flying in all directions, without hurting any one.

"There goes the first!" said Bill Bowls, looking up at the ragged hole that was left.

"Faix, but it's not the last!" cried Flinders, as another stray shot hit the ship, wounding one of the men, and sending a splinter so close past the Irishman that it grazed his cheek. "Hooroo, boys! come on, the more the merrier! Sure it's death or victory we'll be havin' in half-an-hour."

At this moment of intense excitement and expectation, when every man's nerves tingled to be called into vigorous action, Ben Bolter saw fit to give Flinders a lecture.

"Ye shouldn't ought to speak misrespectful of death, boy," said he gravely. "He's a rough customer when he gits hold of ee, an' is sartin sure to have the upper hand. It's my opinion that he'll pay this ship a pretty stiff visit to-night, so you'd better treat him with respect, an' belay yer jokin'—of which yer countrymen are over fond."

To this Flinders listened with a humorous

expression about the corners of his eyes, while he stroked his chin, and awaited a pause in order to make a suitable reply, but an exclamation from Bill Bowls changed the subject abruptly.

"Ho! boys," he cried, "there goes the Admiral."

A tremendous crash followed his words, and the *Vanguard* was seen to pour a broadside into the *Spartiate*—as before related.

The men of the *Majestic* gazed eagerly at the Admiral's ship, which was almost enveloped in thick smoke as they passed ahead, but an order from Captain Westcott to be ready for action called the attention of every man on his duty. Whatever might have been, at that moment, the thoughts of the hundreds of men on board the *Majestic*, the whole soul and body of every man appeared to be concentrated on his own gun, as he awaited in stern silence the order to act.

It came at last, but somewhat differently from what had been expected. A sudden and peculiar motion was felt in the ship, and it was found that she had got entangled with the main rigging of one of the French vessels astern of the *Orient*. Instantly men were sent aloft to cut clear, but before this could be accomplished a perfect storm of shot and shell was sent into them from the towering sides of

the three-decker. Men fell on all sides before they had an opportunity of firing a shot; again and again the crushing shower of metal came; spars and masts fell; the rigging was cut up terribly, and in a short time the *Majestic* would certainly have been sunk had she not fortunately managed to swing clear. A moment afterwards Captain Westcott, finding himself close alongside the *Heureux*—the ninth ship of the enemy's line—gave the word to open fire, and Bill Bowls had at last the satisfaction of being allowed to apply a light to the touch-hole of his gun. Seventy-four men had for some time past felt their fingers itching with an almost irresistible desire to do this, and now upwards of thirty of them were allowed to gratify their wish. Instantly the good ship received a shock that caused her to quiver from the trucks to the keel, as her broadside went crashing into the *Heureux*.

No longer was there impatient inaction on board the *Majestic*, for not only did the *Heureux* reply vigorously, but the *Tonnant*—the eighth of the enemy's line—opened fire on their other side. The *Majestic* therefore fought on both sides. Throughout the whole ship the stalwart, half-naked men heaved at the huge guns. Everywhere, from stem to stern, was exhibited in full swing the active processes of sponging out, passing along powder and ball, ramming

home the charges, running out, working the handspikes, stepping aside to avoid the recoil, —and the whole operation of working the guns, as only British seamen know how to work them! All this was done in the midst of smoke, flame, crashing shot, and flying splinters, while the decks were slippery with human blood, and strewn with dead men, from amongst whom the wounded were raised as tenderly as the desperate circumstances in which they were placed would admit of, and carried below. Many of those who were thus raised never reached the cock-pit, but again fell, along with those who bore them.

One of the men at the gun where Bill Bowls was at work was in the act of handing a round shot to Bill, when a ball entered the port-hole and hit him on the head, scattering his brains over the gun. Bill sprang forward to catch him in his arms, but slipped on the bloody deck and fell. That fall saved his life, for at the same moment a musket ball entered the port and passed close over his head, shattering the arm of a poor boy—one of those brave little fellows called powder-monkeys—who was in the act of carrying a cartridge to Ben Bolter. Ben could not delay the loading of the piece to assist the little fellow, who used his remaining strength to stagger forward and deliver the cartridge before he

fell, but he shouted hastily to a passing shipmate—

"Here, Davis, carry this poor little chap to the cock-pit."

Davis turned and took the boy in his arms. He had almost reached the main hatchway when a shell entered the ship and burst close to him. One fragment killed the boy, and another almost cut Davis in two. They fell and died together.

For a long time this terrible firing at short range went on, and many men fell on both sides. Among others, Captain Westcott was killed. He was the only captain who fell in that battle, and was one who, had his life been spared, would certainly have risen to the highest rank in the service. He had "risen from the ranks," having been the son of a baker in Devonshire, and gained the honourable station in which he lost his life solely through his conspicuous abilities and courage.

Up to this point none of those who are principally concerned in this tale had received any hurt, beyond a few insignificant scratches, but soon after the death of the little boy, Tom Riggles received a severe wound in the leg from a splinter. He was carried below by Bill and Ben.

"It's all over with me," he said in a desponding tone as they went slowly down the

ladders; "I knows it 'll be a case o' ampitation."

"Don't you go for to git down-hearted, Tom," said Ben earnestly. "You 're too tough to be killed easy."

"Well, I *is* tough, but wot 'll toughness do for a feller agin iron shot. I feels just now as if a red-hot skewer wos rumblin' about among the marrow of my back-bone, an' I 've got no feelin' in my leg at all. Depend upon it, messmates, it 's a bad case."

His comrades did not reply, because they had reached the gloomy place where the surgeons were engaged at their dreadful work. They laid Tom down on a locker.

"Good-bye, lads," said Tom, as they were about to turn away, "p'r'aps I 'll not see ye again, so give us a shake o' yer flippers."

Bill and Ben silently squeezed their comrade's hand, being unable to speak, and then hastened back to their stations.

It was about this time that the *Orient* caught fire, and when Bill and his friend reached the deck, sheets of flame were already leaping out at the port-holes of the gigantic ship. The sides of the *Orient* had been recently painted, and the paint-buckets and oil-jars which stood on the poop soon caught, and added brilliancy to the great conflagration which speedily followed the first outbreak of fire. It was

about nine o'clock when the fire was first observed. Before this the gallant French Admiral had perished. Although three times wounded, Brueys refused to quit his post. At length a shot almost cut him in two, but still he refused to go below, and desired to be left to die on his quarter-deck. He was spared the pain of witnessing the destruction of his vessel.

Soon the flames got the mastery, and blazing upward like a mighty torch, threw a strong and appropriate light over the scene of battle. The greater part of the crew of the *Orient* displayed a degree of courage which could not be surpassed, for they stuck to their guns to the very last; continuing to fire from the lower deck while the fire was raging above them, although they knew full well the dire and instantaneous destruction that must ensue when the fire reached the magazine.

The position and flags of the two fleets were now clearly seen, for it was almost as light as day, and the fight went on with unabated fury until about ten o'clock, when, with a terrific explosion, the *Orient* blew up. So tremendous was the shock that it seemed to paralyse the combatants for a little, for both fleets ceased to fire, and there ensued a profound silence, which continued for some time. The first sound that broke the solemn stillness was the splash of the falling spars of the giant ship

as they descended from the immense height to which they had been shot!

Of the hundreds of human beings who manned that ship, scarcely a tithe were saved. About seventy were rescued by English boats. The scattered and burning fragments fell around like rain, and there was much fear lest these should set some of the neighbouring vessels on fire. Two large pieces of burning wreck fell into the *Swiftsure*, and a port fire into the *Alexander*, but these were quickly extinguished.

On board the *Majestic* also, some portions of burning material fell. While these were being extinguished, one of the boats was ordered out to do all that was possible to save the drowning Frenchmen. Among the first to jump into this boat were Bill Bowls and Ben Bolter. Bill took the bow oar, Ben the second, and in a few moments they were pulling cautiously amid the débris of the wreck, helping to haul on board such poor fellows as they could get hold of. The work was difficult, because comparative darkness followed the explosion, and as the fight was soon resumed, the thunder of heavy guns, together with the plunging of ball, exploding of shell, and whizzing of chain-shot over-head, rendered the service one of danger as well as difficulty.

It was observed by the men of the *Majestic's*

boat that several French boats were moving about on the same errand of mercy with themselves, and it was a strange as well as interesting sight to see those who, a few minutes before, had been bent on taking each other's lives, now as earnestly engaged in the work of saving life!

"Back your starboard oars," shouted Ben, just as they passed one of the French boats; "there's a man swimming on the port bow—that's it; steady; lend a hand, Bill; now then, in with him."

A man was hoisted over the gunwale as he spoke, and the boat passed onward. Just then a round shot from one of the more distant ships of the fleet—whether English or French they could not tell—struck the water a few yards from them, sending a column of spray high into the air. Instead of sinking, the shot ricochetted from the water and carried away the bow of the boat in passing, whirling it round and almost overturning it. At the same moment the sea rushed in and swamped it, leaving the crew in the water.

Our hero made an involuntary grasp at the thing that happened to be nearest him. This was the head of his friend Ben Bolter, who had been seated on the thwart in front of him. Ben returned the grasp promptly, and having somehow, in the confusion of the plunge, taken

A Mistake

it into his head that he was in the grasp of a Frenchman, he endeavoured to throttle Bill. Bill, not being easily throttled, forthwith proceeded to choke Ben, and a struggle ensued which might have ended fatally for both, had not a piece of wreck fortunately touched Ben on the shoulder. He seized hold of it, Bill did the same, and then they set about the fight with more precision.

"Come on, ye puddock-eater!" cried Ben, again seizing Bill by the throat.

"Hallo, Ben!"

"Why, wot—is 't you, Bill? Well, now, if I didn't take ee for a Mounseer!"

Before more could be said a boat was observed rowing close past them. Ben hailed it.

"Ho!" cried a voice, as the men rested on their oars and listened.

"Lend a hand, shipmates," cried Ben, "on yer port bow."

The oars were dipped at once, the boat ranged up, and the two men were assisted into it.

"It 's all well as ends well, as I 've heerd the playactors say," observed Ben Bolter, as he shook the water from his garments. "I say, lads, what ship do you belong to?"

"Ve has de honair to b'long to *Le Guillaume Tell*," replied one of the men.

"Hallo, Bill!" whispered Ben, "it's a French

boat, an' we're nabbed. Prisoners o' war, as sure as my name's B. B! Wot's to be done?"

"I'll make a bolt, sink or swim," whispered our hero.

"You vill sit still," said the man who had already spoken to them, laying a hand on Bill's shoulder.

Bill jumped up and made a desperate attempt to leap overboard, but two men seized him. Ben sprang to the rescue instantly, but he also was overpowered by numbers, and the hands of both were tied behind their backs. A few minutes later and they were handed up the side of the French ship.

When day broke on the morning of the 2d of August, the firing still continued, but it was comparatively feeble, for nearly every ship of the French fleet had been taken. Only the *Guillaume Tell* and the *Genereux*—the two rear ships of the enemy—had their colours flying.

These, with two frigates, cut their cables and stood out to sea. The *Zealous* pursued, but as there was no other British ship in a fit state to support her, she was recalled; the four vessels, therefore, escaped at that time, but they were captured not long afterwards. Thus ended the famous battle of the Nile, in regard to which Nelson said that it was a "conquest" rather than a victory.

Of thirteen sail of the line, nine were taken and two burnt; and two of their four frigates were burnt. The British loss in killed and wounded amounted to 896; that of the French was estimated at 2000.

The victory was most complete. The French fleet was annihilated. As might be supposed, the hero of the Nile was, after this, almost worshipped as a demigod. It is worthy of remark here that Nelson, as soon as the conquest was completed, sent orders through the fleet that thanksgiving should be returned, in every ship, to Almighty God, for the victory with which He had blessed his Majesty's arms.

CHAPTER VIII.

OUR HERO AND HIS MESSMATE GET INTO TROUBLE.

ON the night after the battle, Bill Bowls and Ben Bolter were sent on board a French transport ship.

As they sat beside each other, in irons, and securely lodged under hatches, these stout men of war lamented their hard fate thus—

"I say, Bill, this is wot I calls a fix!"

"That's so, Ben—a bad fix."

There was silence for a few minutes, then Ben resumed—

"Now, d'ye see, this here war may go on for ever so long—years it may be,—an' here we are on our way to a French prison, where we'll have the pleasure, mayhap, of spendin' our youth in twirlin' our thumbs or bangin' our heads agin the bars of our cage."

"There ain't a prison in France as'll hold me," said Bill Bowls resolutely.

"No? how d'ee 'xpect to git out—seein' that the walls and doors ain't made o' butter, nor yet o' turnips?" inquired Ben.

"I'll go up the chimbley," said Bill savagely, for his mind had reverted to Nelly Blyth, and he could not bear to think of prolonged imprisonment.

"But wot if they've got no chimbleys?"

"I'll try the winders."

"But if the winders is tight barred, wot then?"

"Why, then, I'll bust 'em, or I'll bust myself, that's all."

"Humph!" ejaculated Ben.

Again there was a prolonged silence, during which the friends moodily meditated on the dark prospects before them.

"If we could only have bin killed in action," said Bill, "that would have been some comfort."

"Not so sure o' that, messmate," said Ben. "There's no sayin' wot may turn up. P'r'aps the war will end soon, an' that's not onlikely, for we've whipped the Mounseers on sea, an' it won't be difficult for our lobsters to lick 'em on land. P'r'aps there'll be an exchange of prisoners, an' we may have a chance of another brush with them one o' these days. If the wust comes to the wust, we can try to break out o' jail and run a muck for our lives. Never say die is my motto."

Bill Bowls did not assent to these sentiments in words, but he clenched his fettered hands, set his teeth together, and gave his comrade a

look which assured him that whatever might be attempted he would act a vigorous part.

A few days later the transport entered a harbour, and a guard came on board to take charge of the prisoners, of whom there were about twenty. As they were being led to the jail of the town, Bill whispered to his comrade—

"Look out sharp as ye go along, Ben, an' keep as close to me as ye can."

"All right, my lad," muttered Ben, as he followed the soldiers who specially guarded himself.

Ben did not suppose that Bill intended then and there to make a sudden struggle for freedom, because he knew that, with fettered wrists, in a strange port, the very name of which they did not know, and surrounded by armed enemies, such an attempt would be utterly hopeless; he therefore concluded, correctly, that his companion wished him to take the bearings (as he expressed it) of the port, and of the streets through which they should pass. Accordingly he kept his "weather-eye open."

The French soldiers who conducted the seamen to prison, although stout athletic fellows, and, doubtless, capable of fighting like heroes, were short of stature, so that the British tars looked down on them with a patronizing ex-

pression of countenance, and one or two even ventured on a few facetious remarks. Bill Bowls and Ben Bolter, who both measured above six feet in their stockings, towered above the crowd like two giants.

"It 's a purty place intirely," said an Irish sailor, with a smiling countenance, looking round upon the houses, and nodding to a group of pretty girls who were regarding the prisoners with looks of pity. "What may be the name of it, av I may make bowld to inquire?"

The question was addressed to the soldier on his right, but the man paid no attention. So the Irishman repeated it, but without drawing forth a reply.

"Sure, yer a paltry thing that can't give a civil answer to a civil question."

"He don't understand Irish, Pat, try him with English," said Ben Bolter.

"Ah, then," said Pat, "ye 'd better try that yersilf, only yer so high up there he won't be able to hear ye."

Before Ben had an opportunity of trying the experiment, however, they had arrived at the jail. After they had passed in, the heavy door was shut with a clang, and bolted and barred behind them.

It is probable that not one of the poor fellows who heard the sound, escaped a sensation of sinking at the heart, but certain it is that

not one condescended to show his feelings in his looks.

They were all put into a large empty room, the window of which looked into a stone passage, which was itself lighted from the roof; the door was shut, locked, bolted, and barred, and they were left to their meditations.

They had not remained long there, however, when the bolts and bars were heard moving again.

"What say ee to a rush, lads?" whispered one of the men eagerly.

"Agreed," said Bill Bowls, starting forward; "I 'll lead you, boys."

"No man can fight with his hands tied," growled one of the others. "You 'll only be spoilin' a better chance, mayhap."

At that moment the last bolt was withdrawn, and the door swung open, revealing several files of soldiers with muskets, and bayonets fixed, in the passage. This sight decided the question of a rush!

Four of the soldiers entered with the turnkey. The latter, going up to Bill Bowls and Ben Bolter, said to them in broken English:—

"You follows de soldat."

Much surprised, but in silence, they obeyed the command.

As they were going out, one of their comrades said, "Good-bye, mates; it 's plain

they've taken ye for admirals on account o' yer size!"

"Niver a taste," said the Irishman before mentioned, "'tis bein' led, they are, to exekooshion—"

The remainder of this consolatory suggestion was cut off by the shutting of the door.

After traversing several passages, the turnkey stopped before a small door studded with iron nails, and, selecting one of his huge keys, opened it, while the soldiers ranged up on either side.

The turnkey, who was a tall, powerful man, stepped back, and, looking at Bill, pointed to the cell with his finger, as much as to say, "Go in."

Bill looked at him and at the soldiers for a moment, clenched his fists, and drew his breath short, but as one of the guard quietly brought his musket to the charge, he heaved a sigh, bent his head, and, passing under the low doorway, entered the cell.

"Are we to stop long here, Mister Turnkey?" asked Ben, as he was about to follow.

The man vouchsafed no reply, but again pointed to the cell.

"I've always heered ye wos a purlite nation," said Ben, as he followed his messmate; "but there's room for improvement."

The door was shut, and the two friends stood

for a few minutes in the centre of their cell, gazing in silence around the blank walls.

The appearance of their prison was undoubtedly depressing, for there was nothing whatever in it to arrest the eye, except a wooden bench in one corner, and the small grated window which was situated near the top of one of the walls.

"What d' ye think o' this?" asked Ben, after some time, sitting down on the bench.

"I think I won't be able to stand it," said Bill, flinging himself recklessly down beside his friend, and thrusting his hands deep into his trouser pockets.

"Don't take on so bad, messmate," said Ben, in a reproving tone. "Gittin' sulky with fate ain't o' no manner o' use. As our messmate Flinders used to say, 'Be aisy, an' if ye can't be aisy, be as aisy as ye can.' There 's wot I calls sound wisdom in that."

"Very true, Ben; nevertheless the sound wisdom in *that* won't avail to get us out o' *this*."

"No doubt, but it 'll help us to bear this with equablenimity while we 're here, an' set our minds free to think about the best way o' makin' our escape."

At this Bill made an effort to throw off the desperate humour which had taken possession of him, and he so far succeeded that he was enabled to converse earnestly with his friend.

"Wot are we to do?" asked Bill gloomily.

"To see, first of all, what lies outside o' that there port-hole," answered Ben. "Git on my shoulders, Bill, an' see if ye can reach it."

Ben stood against the wall, and his friend climbed on his shoulders, but so high was the window, that he could not reach to within a foot of it. They overcame this difficulty, however, by dragging the bench to the wall, and standing upon it.

"I see nothin'," said Bill, "but the sky an' the sea, an' the prison-yard, which appears to me to be fifty or sixty feet below us."

"That's not comfortin'," observed Ben, as he replaced the bench in its corner.

"What's your advice now?" asked Bill.

"That we remain on our good behaviour a bit," replied Ben, "an' see wot they means to do with us, an' whether a chance o' some sort won't turn up."

"Well, that's a good plan—anyhow, it's an easy one to begin with—so we'll try it for a day or two."

In accordance with this resolve, the two sailors called into play all the patience, prudence, and philosophy of which they were possessed, and during the three days that followed their incarceration, presented such a meek, gentle, resigned aspect, that the stoniest heart of the most iron-moulded turnkey ought

to have been melted; but the particular turnkey of that prison was made of something more or less than mortal mould, for he declined to answer questions,—declined even to open his lips, or look as if he heard the voices of his prisoners, and took no notice of them farther than to fetch their food at regular intervals and take away the empty plates. He, however, removed their manacles; but whether of his own good-will or by order they did not know.

"Now, Ben," said Bill on the evening of the third day, as they sat beside each other twirling their thumbs, "this here sort o' thing will never do. I mean for to make a dash when the turnkey comes in the mornin'; will you help me?"

"I'm yer man," said Ben; "but how d'ye mean to set about it?"

"Well, somewhat in this fashion:—W'enever he opens the door I'll clap my hand on his mouth to stop his pipe, and you'll slip behind him, throw yer arms about him, and hold on till I tie a handkerchief over his mouth. Arter that we'll tie his hands and feet with whatever we can git hold of—his own necktie, mayhap—take the keys from him, and git out the best way we can."

"H'm; but wot if we don't know the right turnin's to take, an' run straight into the jaws of other turnkeys, p'r'aps, or find other doors an' gates that his bunch o' keys won't open?"

"Why, then, we'll just fail, that's all; an' if they should scrag us for it, no matter."

"It's a bad look-out, but I'll try," said Ben.

Next morning this plan was put in execution. When the turnkey entered the cell, Bill seized him and clapped his hand on his mouth. The man struggled powerfully, but Ben held him in a grasp so tight that he was as helpless as an infant.

"Keep yer mind easy, Mounseer, we won't hurt ee," said Ben, while his comrade was busy gagging him.

"Now, then, lift him into the corner," whispered Bill.

Ben and he carried the turnkey, whom they had tied hand and foot with handkerchiefs and neckties, into the interior of the cell, left him there, locked the door on him, and immediately ran along the passage, turned a corner, and came in sight of an iron grating, on the other side of which sat a man in a dress similar to that of the turnkey they had left behind them. They at once drew back and tried to conceal themselves, but the man had caught sight of them, and gave the alarm.

Seeing that their case was desperate, Bill rushed at the grating with all his force and threw himself heavily against it. The whole building appeared to quiver with the shock;

but the caged tiger has a better chance of smashing his iron bars than poor Bill Bowls had. Twice he flung his whole weight against the barrier, and the second time Ben helped him; but their efforts were in vain. A moment later and a party of soldiers marched up to the grating on the outside. At the same time a noise was heard at the other end of the passage. Turning round, the sailors observed that another gate had been opened, and a party of armed men admitted, who advanced with levelled muskets.

Seeing this, Bill burst into a bitter laugh, and flung down the keys with a force that caused the long passage to echo again, as he exclaimed—

"It's all up with us, Ben. We may as well give in at once."

"That's so," said Ben sadly, as he suffered himself to be handcuffed, after which he and his companion in misfortune were conducted back to their cell.

CHAPTER IX.

BILL AND BEN SET THEIR BRAINS TO STEEP WITH UNCONQUERABLE PERSEVERANCE.

IN its slow but steady revolution, the wheel of fortune had now apparently brought Bill Bowls and Ben Bolter to the lowest possible point; and the former of these worthies consoled himself with the reflection that, as things could scarcely get worse with them, it was probable they would get better. His friend disputed this point.

"It's all very well," said Ben, crossing his legs and clasping his hands over his knees, as he swayed himself to and fro, "to talk about havin' come to the wust; but we've not got to that pint by a long way. Why, suppose that, instead o' bein' here, sound in wind and limb, though summat unfort'nate in regard to the matter o' liberty,—suppose, I say, that we wos lyin' in hospital with our right legs an' mayhap our left arms took off with a round shot."

"Oh, if you go for to *supposin'*," said Bill, "you may suppose anything. Why not sup-

pose at once that we was lyin' in hospital with both legs and arms took off by round shot, an' both eyes put out with canister, an' our heads an' trunks carried away by grape-shot?"

"I didn't suppose that," said Ben quietly, "because that would be the best instead o' the wust state we could come to, seein' that we'd know an' care nothin' about it. Hows'ever, here we are, low enough, an' havin' made an assault on the turnkey, it's not likely we'll get much favour at the hands of the Mounseers; so it comes to this, that we must set our brains to steep, an' see if we can't hit upon some dodge or other to escape."

"That's what we must do," assented Bill Bowls, knitting his brows, and gazing abstractedly at the blank wall opposite. "To git out o' this here stone jug is what I've set my heart on, so the sooner we set about it the better."

"Just so," said Ben. "Well, then, let's begin. Wot d'ee propose fust?"

To this Bill replied that he must think over it. Accordingly, he did think over it, and his comrade assisted him, for the space of three calendar months, without any satisfactory result. But the curious thing about it was that, while these men revolved in their minds every conceivable plan with unflagging eagerness, and were compelled to give up each after brooding over it for a considerable time, finding that it was unwork-

able, they were not dispirited, but rather became more intense in their meditations, and ingenious as well as hopeful in their devisings.

"If we could only git hold of a file to cut a bar o' the winder with, an' a rope to let ourselves down with, I think we could manage to git over the walls somehow."

"If we was to tear our jackets, trousers, vests, and shirts into stripes, an' make a rope of 'em, it might be long enough," suggested Bill.

"That 's so, boy, but as we would be stark naked before we got it finished, I fear the turnkey would suspec' there wos somethin' wrong somehow."

Ben Bolter sighed deeply as he spoke, because at that moment a ray of sunshine shot through the little window, and brought the free fresh air and the broad blue sea vividly to his remembrance. For the first time he experienced a deep sinking of the heart, and he looked at his comrade with an expression of something like despair.

"Cheer up," said Bill, observing and thoroughly understanding the look. "Never say die, as long as there 's a—shot—in—"

He was too much depressed and listless to finish the sentence.

"I wonder," resumed Ben, "if the Mounseers treat all their prisoners of war as bad as they treat us."

"Don't think they do," replied Bill. "I've no doubt it's 'cause we sarved 'em as we did when they first put us in quod."

"Oh, if they would only give us summat to do!" exclaimed Ben, with sudden vehemence.

It seemed as if the poor fellow's prayer were directly answered, for at that moment the door opened, and the governor, or some other official of the prison, entered the cell.

"You must vork," he said, going up to Bill.

"We 'll be only too glad to work, yer honour, if you 'll give us work to do."

"Ver' good; fat can you vork?"

"We can turn handy to a'most anything, yer honour," said Ben eagerly.

It turned out, however, after a considerable amount of talk, that, beyond steering a ship, reefing topsails, splicing ropes, tying every species of complex knot, and other nautical matters, the two seamen could not claim to be professionally acquainted with any sort of handicraft. Somewhat discomfited, Ben at last said with a perplexed air—

"Well, yer honour, we 'll try anything ye choose to put us at. I had a brother once who was a sort of tinker to trade, an' great at mendin' pots, pans, old umbrellas, and the like. I wos used to help him when a boy. P'r'aps if yer honour, now, has got a old umbrella as wants refittin', I might try my hand on that."

The governor smiled. "Vell, I do tink I have von old omberilla. You sall try for to mend him."

Next day saw Bill and Ben surrounded by tools, scraps of wood and whalebone, bits of brass and tin, etc., busy as bees, and as happy as any two children who have invented a new game.

Ben mended the umbrella admirably. At the same time, Bill fashioned and carved two or three paper-knives of wood with great neatness. But when it was discovered that they could sew sail-cloth expeditiously and well, a quantity of that material was given to them, and they were ordered to make sacks. They set to work accordingly, and made sack after sack until they grew so wearied of the monotonous work that Ben said it made him wish to sit down in sackcloth and ashes; whereupon Bill remarked that if the Mounseers would only give them the sack altogether, it would be very much to their credit.

Soon the imprisoned mariners began again to plot and plan their escape. Of course they thought of making ropes of the sailcloth and twine with which they wrought, but as the turnkey took the material away every night, and brought it back every morning, they gave up this idea, as they had given up many other ideas before.

At last, one afternoon, Bill looked up from his work, hit his thigh a slap which produced

a pistol-shot crack that echoed up into the high ceiling of the cell, as he exclaimed, "I 've got it!"

"I hope you 'll give us a bit of it, then," said Ben, "if it 's worth havin'."

"I 'll give you the benefit of it, anyhow," said Bill, throwing down his tools and eagerly beginning to expound the new plan which had struck him and caused him to strike his thigh. It was to this effect :—

That they should beg the turnkey to let them have another old umbrella to work at by way of recreation, as the sack-making was rather monotonous; that, if they should be successful in prevailing on him to grant their request, they should work at the umbrella very slowly, so as to give them time to carry out their plan, which was to form a sort of parachute by adding sailcloth round the margin of the umbrella so as to extend it to twice its circumference. After it should be finished they were to seize a fitting opportunity, cut the bars of their window, and, with the machine, leap down into the yard below.

"Wot!" exclaimed Ben, "jump together!"

"Ay, why not, Ben? Sink or swim together, boy."

"Very true, but I 've got my doubts about flyin' together. Better do it one at a time, and send the umbrella up by means of a piece of twine."

"Well, we might do it in that way," said Bill; "but what d'ee think o' the plan?"

"Fuss rate," said Ben, "we'll try it at once."

In accordance with this resolution, Ben made his petition that night, very humbly, to the turnkey, who at first turned a deaf ear to him, but was finally prevailed on to fetch them one of his own umbrellas to be repaired. It happened to be a very large one of the good old stout and bulgy make, and in this respect was the better suited to their purpose. All the tools necessary for the work of repair were supplied except a file. This, however, was brought to them, when Ben pointed out, with much earnestness, that if he had such an implement he could clean up and beautify the ivory handle to such an extent that its owner would not recognise it.

This device of improving the ivory handle turned out to be a happy hit, for it enabled Ben to keep the umbrella much longer by him than would otherwise have been possible, for the purpose of covering it with elaborate and really beautiful carving, the progress of which was watched by the turnkey with much interest from day to day.

Having gained their end the sailors wrought with indefatigable zeal, and resolutely overcame the difficulties that met them from time to time. Each day they dragged the bench under

the window. Ben got upon it, and Bill climbed on his shoulders, by which means he could just reach the iron grating of the window, and there, for half an hour at a time, he cautiously used the file. They thought this enough of time to bestow on the work, because the bars could be easily filed through before the parachute was ready.

In the preparation of the umbrella, the first difficulty that met them was how they were to conceal their private work when the turnkey came in the evenings to take away their materials for sack-making. After some examination they discovered a plank in the floor, in the corner where they were wont to sleep, which was loose and easily forced up with one of Bill's unfinished paper-knives, which he made very strong for this special purpose! Beneath there was sufficient room to stow away the cloth with which they fashioned the additional breadth to the umbrella. To have cabbaged at one time all the sail-cloth that was required would have risked discovery; they therefore appropriated small scraps each day, and sewed these neatly together until they had enough. Soon they had a ring of canvas formed, into the centre of which the umbrella fitted exactly, and this ring was so cut and sewn in gores that it formed a continuation of the umbrella, which was thus made

to spread out and cover a space of about nine or ten feet in diameter. All round the extremity or margin of the ring, cords of twisted twine were fixed, at intervals of about six inches. There were about sixty of these cords or stays, all of which met and were fastened at the end of the handle. A stout line, made of four-ply twine, was fastened at the top of the umbrella, and passing through a small hole in it was tied round the whalebones inside, and twisted down the stick to the handle, to which it was firmly secured. By this means the whole machine was, as it were, bound together.

All these additions and fixings had, however, to be so constructed that they could be removed, or affixed with some rapidity, for there was always before the sailors the chance that the turnkey might look in to observe how their work was progressing.

Indeed one afternoon they were almost discovered at work on the parachute. The turnkey was heard coming along the passage when Ben was in the act of fitting on the new appendages, and the key was actually in the door before the last shred of them was thrust into the hole in the floor, and the loose plank shut down! Ben immediately flung several of the sacks over the place, and then turning suddenly round on his comrade began to pom-

mel him soundly by way of accounting for the flushed condition of his countenance.

Thus taken by surprise, Bill returned the blows with interest, and the combatants were separated by the turnkey when in a rather breathless condition!

"If you do so more agin, you sall go separate," said the turnkey.

The mere thought of separation at such a moment struck like a chill to the hearts of the sailors, who forthwith shook hands, and vowed earnestly that they would "never do it again." In order to conciliate the man, Ben took up the umbrella, and pointing to the beautifully carved handle said—

"You see it's all but finished, and I'm very anxious to git it done, so if you'll let me keep it by me all to-night, I'll work as long as I can see, and be at it the first thing in the morning."

The man, pleased at the unusual interest which Ben took in the worn-out piece of goods, agreed to let him keep it by him. After carrying away all the other materials, and looking round to see that all was right, he locked them up for the night.

Left to themselves, they at once began to prepare for action. They drew forth all the different parts of the parachute (for such it really was, although the machine so named had

never been seen, but only heard of, by the seamen), and disposed them in such a manner beside the hole in the floor as to be ready at a moment's notice, either to be fitted on to the umbrella or thrust back into the place of concealment.

Their manacles had been taken off at the time they began to work, so that these were no longer impediments in the way.

"Now, Bill, are the bars sûre to give way, d' ye think?"

"Sartin sure," said Bill; "they're holdin' by nothin' thicker than a pin."

"Very good, then, let's go to work. In an hour or so it will be dark enough to try our flyin' machine, and then good-bye to France —or to the world. It's neck or nothin', d' ye see."

"All right," answered Bill.

They sat down to work in good earnest. The spreading rim of canvas, instead of being tagged on as on former occasions, was now sewn securely to the umbrella, and when the latter was expanded, the canvas hung down all round it, and the numerous stays hung quite loose. Ben expected that the rapidity of the descent would suddenly expand this appendage, and check the speed. The ends of the loose cords were gathered up and fastened to the handle, as was also the binding-cord before referred to—all of which was done with

that thoroughness of workmanship for which sailors are celebrated.

Then a stout cord was fastened to one of the stanchions of the window, which had been left uncut for the purpose.

When everything was ready the adventurous sailors began to experience all the anxiety which is inseparable from an action involving much danger, liability to frustration, and requiring the utmost caution combined with energy.

They waited until they thought the night was at its darkest. When all sounds around them had ceased, they took off their shoes and carefully lifted the bench to the wall under the window. Ben went up first by mounting on Bill's shoulders. With one powerful wrench he pulled the iron framework of the window into the room, and handed it down to Bill, who stooped a little and placed it gently against the wall. His comrade then thrust his head and shoulders out at the window, and while in that awkward position spread his jacket over the sill. This was intended to protect the cord which was fastened to the top of the umbrella, and by which it was to be drawn up after his descent.

When this was done, Bill clambered up by the cord which hung from the uncut stanchion, and pushed the umbrella past Ben's body until he got hold of the end of it, and drew it

out altogether. Bill then descended into the cell, having the small cord in his hand, and watched the motions of his comrade with intense anxiety.

The window was so small that Ben could barely get his head and shoulders through it. There was no possibility of his getting on his feet or his knees to make a leap. The only course that remained for him, therefore, was to expand the umbrella, hold on tight, and then wriggle out until he should lose his balance and fall head foremost! It was an awful position. Bold though the seaman was, and desperate the circumstances, his strong frame quivered when he gazed down and felt himself gradually toppling. The height he knew to be little short of sixty feet, but in the dark night it appeared an abyss of horrible profundity. A cold sweat broke out upon him, and for one moment he felt an almost irresistible tendency to let go the umbrella and clutch the window-sill, but he was too late. Like lightning he shot down for a couple of yards; then the parachute expanded and checked him with such violence, as he swung round, that he nearly lost his hold and was thrown into a horizontal position—first on one side, then on the other. Finally, he reached the ground with a shock that almost took away his breath. He sat still for a moment or two, then rose slowly and

shook himself, to ascertain whether he were still alive and sound! Immediately after he examined the parachute, found it all right, and gave his comrade the signal—a couple of tugs at the cord—to haul up.

Bill was scarcely less agitated than his friend. He had seen Ben's legs disappear with a suddenness that told eloquently of his having taken flight, and stood in the cell above listening intently, while large drops of perspiration coursed down his face. On feeling the tug at the string, a mountain appeared to be lifted off his chest. Carefully he pulled up the umbrella. When it showed its point above the window-sill he clambered up and went through the same terrible ordeal. He was not, however, so fortunate as his friend, for, when he jumped, three of the stays gave way, which had the effect of slightly deranging the motion of the umbrella, and he came to the ground with such violence that he lay stunned and motionless, leading his horrified comrade to fear that he was killed. In a few minutes, however, he revived, and, on examination, found that no bones had been broken.

"Now, Ben, what next?" said Bill, getting up, and giving himself a shake.

"The wall," said Ben, "can't be far from where we stand. If there wos only a bit of moonshine it would help us."

"Better as it is," whispered Bill, groping about, for the night was so intensely dark that it was scarcely possible to see a yard. "I knows the way to the harbour, if we only manage to get out.—Ah, here's the wall, but it's an oncommon high one!"

This was indeed too true. The top of the wall was faintly visible like a black line across the dark sky, and when Ben mounted on Bill's shoulders, it was found that he could only reach to within three feet of the bristling iron spikes with which it was surmounted. For half-an-hour they groped about, and made the discovery that they were in a small enclosure with bare walls of fifteen feet in height around them, and not a projection of any kind large enough for a mouse to lay hold of! In these circumstances many men would have given way to despair; but that was a condition of mind which neither of our tars ever thought of falling into. In the course of their explorations they came against each other, and immediately began an animated conversation in whispers, the result of which was that they groped for the umbrella, and, having found it, cut off all the cords about it, with which they proceeded to plait a rope strong enough to bear their weight. They sat down in silence to the work, leaning against the prison wall, and wrought for a full hour with the diligence of men

whose freedom depends on their efforts. When finished, the rope was found to be about a yard too short for their purpose; but this defect was remedied by means of the canvas of their parachute, which they tore up into stripes, twisted into an additional piece of rope, and spliced it to the other. A large loop was made on the end of it. Going once more to the wall, Ben mounted on Bill's shoulders, and threw the loop ever the top of the wall; it caught, as had been expected, on one of the iron spikes. Ben then easily hauled himself up, hand over hand, and, getting hold of two spikes, raised himself so that he could see over the wall. Immediately after he descended.

"I sees nothin', Bill, so we must just go over and take our chance."

Bill agreed. Ben folded his coat, and ascending again, spread it over the spikes, so that he could lean on them with his chest without being pierced. Having re-ascended, Bill followed; the rope was then hauled up, and lowered on the other side. In another moment they slipped down, and stood on the ground.

"Now, the question is, where are we!" whispered Bill. "P'r'aps we 're only in another yard after all."

The sound of footsteps pacing slowly towards them was heard at that moment."

"I do believe," whispered Bill, in an excited

tone, "that we 've got into the street, an' that 's the sentry. Let 's bolt."

"We can't bolt," said Ben, "'cause, if I took my bearin's right, he 's between us an' the shore, an' it would be of no manner o' use boltin' into the country to be hunted down like a couple of foxes."

"Then we 'll floor him to begin with," whispered Bill.

"That 's so," said Ben.

The sentry approached, and the sailors drew up close against the wall. Presently his dark form became faintly visible. Bill rushed at him at once, and delivered a blow that might have felled an ox at the spot where he supposed his chest was, sending the man back almost heels over head, while his arms rattled on the pavement. Instantly there were heard the sounds of opening locks, bolts, and bars. The two friends fled, and shouts were heard behind them, while lights flashed in various directions.

"This way, Bill," cried Ben, turning down a narrow lane to avoid a lamp which came in sight when they turned a corner. A couple of belated and drunken French fishermen happened to observe them, and gave chase. "Hold on, Ben, let 's drop, and trip 'em up," said Bill.

"All right," replied Ben; "down with ee."

They stopped suddenly, and squatted as low

as possible. The lane was very narrow; the fishermen were close behind; they tumbled right over them, and fell heavily on their faces. While they were rising, our heroes knocked them both insensible, and hastily appropriating their coats and red caps put them on as they ran. By this time a crowd of fishermen, sailors, and others, among whom were a few soldiers and turnkeys with lanterns, were pursuing the fugitives as fast as was possible in so dark a night. Bill suggested that they should turn into a dark corner, and dodge them. The suggestion was acted on at once. They dashed round the first corner they came to, and then, instead of continuing their flight, turned sharp to the left, and hid in a doorway. The pursuers came pouring round the corner, shouting wildly. When the thickest of the crowd was opposite their place of concealment, Bill and Ben rushed into the midst of them with a shout, imitating the tones of the Frenchmen as nearly as possible, but taking care to avoid the use of words, and thus they joined in the pursuit! Gradually they fell behind, as if outrun, and, when they found themselves in rear, turned about, and made off in the opposite direction, then, diverging to the left, they headed again towards the shore, ran down to the beach, and leaped into the first boat they came to.

It happened to be a very small one,—a sort of dingy. Ben thought it was too small, and was about to leap out and search for a larger, when lights suddenly appeared, and the shouts of the pursuers—who had discovered the *ruse*—were heard as they approached.

"Shove off, Ben!"

"Hurrah, my hearties!" cried the seaman with a stentorian shout as he seized an oar.

Next moment the little boat was flying over the smooth water of the port, the silence of which was now broken by exclamations and cries from the shipping in reply to those from the shore; while the splashing of oars were heard in all directions as men leaped into boats and rowed about at random. Darkness favoured the Englishmen, but it also proved the cause of their being very nearly re-captured; for they were within two yards of the battery at the mouth of the harbour before they observed it, and swerved aside just in time to avoid a collision. But they had been seen, and a random discharge of musketry followed. This was succeeded by the sudden blaze of a blue light, which revealed the whole port swarming with boats and armed men,—a sight which acted so powerfully on the warlike spirits of the sailors that they started up simultaneously, flung their red caps into the air, and gave vent to a hearty British cheer, which Ben Bolter followed up

as they resumed the oars, with "Old England for ever! farewell, Mounseers!"

The blue light went out and left everything in darkness thicker than ever, but not before a rapid though ineffective discharge of musketry had been made from the battery. Another blue light, however, showed that the fugitives were getting rapidly out to sea beyond the range of musketry, and that boats were leaving the port in chase. Before the light expired a cloud of smoke burst from the battery, and the roar of a heavy gun rushed over the sea. An instant later and the water was torn up by grape-shot all round the little boat; but not a ball touched them save one, which struck Bill Bowls on the left hand and cut off his thumb.

"I think there's a mast and sail in the bottom of the boat, and here comes a breeze," said Ben; "give me your oar, and try to hoist it, Bill."

Without mentioning his wound, our hero did as he was bid; and not until the boat was leaping over the ruffled sea did he condescend to bind up the wounded hand with his necktie. Soon they were beyond the range of blue lights and artillery.

"Have ee any notion what course we're steerin'?" inquired Bill.

"None wotsomediver," answered Ben.

Soon after that, however, the sky cleared a little, and Bill got sight of part of the constellation of the Great Bear. Although the pole-star was not visible, he guessed pretty nearly its position, and thus ascertained that the breeze came from the south-west. Trimming the lug-sail accordingly, the tars turned the prow of the little craft to the northward, and steered for the shores of old England.

* * * *

About a year after this stirring incident, a remarkably noisy party was assembled at tea in the prim little parlour of Mrs. Blyth's cottage in Fairway. Besides the meek old soul herself, there were present on that occasion our old friends Ben Bolter and Tom Riggles, the latter of whom flourished a wooden stump instead of a right leg, and wore the garb of a Greenwich pensioner. His change of circumstances did not appear to have decreased his love for tobacco. Ben had obtained leave of absence from his ship for a day or two, and, after having delighted the heart of his old mother by a visit, had called at the cottage to pay his respects to his old messmate, little thinking that he would find Tom Riggles there before him. Miss Bessy Blunt was also present; and it was plain, from the expression of her speaking countenance, that she had not forgiven Ben, but tolerated him under protest. Our hero and sweet

Nelly Blyth were not of the party, however, because they happened just then to prefer a quiet chat in the summer-house in the back garden. We will not presume to detail much of the conversation that passed between them. One or two of the concluding sentences must suffice.

"Yes, Bill," said Nelly, in reply to something that her companion had whispered in her ear, "you know well enough that I am glad to-morrow is our wedding-day. I have told you so already, fifty times at least."

"Only thrice, Nell, if so often," said Bill. "Well, that *was* the luckiest shot the Frenchmen ever fired at me; for if I hadn't had my thumb took off I couldn't have left the sarvice, d'ye see; and that would have delayed my marriage with you, Nell. But now, as the old song says—

'No more I'll roam
Away from home,
Across the stormy sea.
I'll anchor here,
My Nelly dear,
And live for love and thee.'"

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